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MOTOCROSS ACTION MAGAZINE

34485 JULY 1973 75¢

TESTING:
MACHO HONDA
AND TWO YAMAHAS

CROSS-UPS
ON CAMPUS

EUROPEAN RIDERS
AND TRICKERY

HOOKIN' IT...
HANGTOWN AND THE 125 NATIONAL

Pierre
Karsmakers
talks MX

Retailers: see Page 73 for Special
Display Allowance Plan

Behind the Winter-AMA Motocross Championship are two good names.

The Yamaha MX360 was the first. The other was Yamaha Team rider Pierre Karsmakers. Pierre outclassed the competition in the Florida Winter-AMA Motocross Series by capturing four out of six events.

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St. Petersburg — Tripes
Hialeah — **Karsmakers**
Ft. Pierce — **Karsmakers**

Someday, you'll own a Yamaha

MOTOCROSS ACTION MAGAZINE

required reading or you flunk motocross

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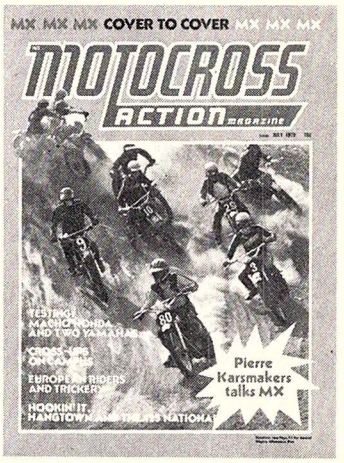

Bower, Taylor, Lopez, McDougal, Kolbe, and Malone all waiting for Billy Payne to make a mistake on Arroyo's start hill.

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MOTOCROSS ACTION:

Brought to you by drooling, wide-eyed motocross fanatics, bizzarros of the worst kind, and guys likely to be sitting next to you at the starting gate.

What do you think of our new magazine now that you've flipped through it? Yes, this page is supposed to be an introduction that's read first, but human nature being what it is, you're reading it last. Especially when there is enticing motocross action in the rest of the book.

This is all well and good, because now you're sort of familiar with what we're getting at. You probably noticed that we haven't included a whole helluva lot about trail riding, enduros, or desert racing. In fact, zero. Don't ever expect to find anything except hard-core motocross articles in MOTOCROSS ACTION Magazine . . . tests of real motocross bikes . . . profiles of motocross stars, soon-to-be stars, and hopeful beginners . . . reports on significant races from around the world . . . articles to help you make your motocross bike into a better motocross bike . . . and worthwhile tips to help you be a better motocross rider. Since motocross is mostly a visual trip, MOTOCROSS ACTION Magazine will feature lots of photos of motocross riders doing what they do best—blowing minds. All, of course, presented objectively to keep the sport aboveboard and to keep our readers from being ripped off. We're going to have fun putting the magazine together, and you're going to have a lot of fun reading it. Fun is what it's all about.

MOTOCROSS ACTION is a spin-off from a dirt riding magazine, which evolved from the "please everybody" bike magazines, and as such is a highly specialized publication. We feel that motocross deserves its own spokesman and historian, because it is on the verge of becoming a very significant sport in this country. To us, motocross is already significant, but with a little pushing, prodding, self-searching, and the exposure that MOTOCROSS ACTION can provide, it will become a significant sport to millions of people.

What does motocross as a major sport mean to you, the enthusiast? Firstly, the professional rider will be able to earn salaries and be able to race for purses that are commensurate with the quality of the job he's doing. If a pro golfer can make several hundred grand a year banging a little white ball all over the countryside, a motocross racer who is an athlete/gymnast/death-defier/tactician/mechanic/and all-around pleasure giver ought to make the same kind of money. The average Sunday afternoon funocrosser, which includes most of us, will benefit by having the quality of the sport upgraded to a point where it will be safer and more convenient to be a motocross rider, more prestigious too, and a healthier rapport between race-promoter and rider will have to develop. For the spectator, the benefits are obvious . . . more and better MX. If nothing else, motocross in the big leagues will make MOTOCROSS ACTION Magazine more exciting, and give both of us a way to enjoy the sport in our living rooms.

A situation that enhances the future potential of motocross, though in a sad way, is the land closure problems that Americans are facing. With nowhere else to ride competitively, racers will be forced to go to either motocross or trials. We opt for motocross, of course, but it's still rough to see our sport grow, even to a small extent, because of the large-scale deprivation of millions of Americans' birthrights to the land. Our companion publication, DIRT BIKE (around whose offices I used to loiter), is tracking the land closure problem on behalf of the riders. I, for one, think they and the few other crusaders will ultimately beat the bureaucracy, but until then motocross tracks should be brimming to capacity.

Unlike most of the other cycle magazines, MOTOCROSS ACTION is not going to look like a travel guide to Southern California. Motocross is happening all over the country and throughout the world, and we intend to go where the story is. We will set up editorial offices in mid-America and a network of correspondents to get the news. There are talented riders and significant races occurring all over the country, but the motocross enthusiast is only able to read reports on the Trans-AMA or similar races. Have you ever heard of Mike Hartwig (Michigan), Steve Stackable (Texas), Jimmy Ellis (Connecticut), or Pete Maly (California)? I bet not, but these guys are regularly toasting some "name" riders.

Keep reading this magazine and you'll find out about them and others like them. You'll also read about their races and their places. And about the established pro motocrossers; what they're doing and thinking, and about their machinery and how it relates to your machinery, whether they're racing in Belgium, Wisconsin, or California.

MOTOCROSS ACTION Magazine will stress the point that motocross is a very serious sport. Naturally, it is a leisure-time, get-your-head-straight activity, but once the starting gate drops all the kidding stops. We think motocross riders should be serious motocross riders. They should know how to get the best from their bikes and from their bodies, because that is the key to success. Our articles will help.

One final note; the editors of MX ACTION have a very low tolerance for boredom, so don't expect to find many snores in this magazine. And oh yes, one more final note; if you ever see anyone refer to motocross as moto*r*cross, remove the "R" and dot his eye for me.

Pete Szilagyi

THE SECOND STROKE

THE EASY WAY OUT

By Pete Szilagyi

You have to be in good physical condition to be a decent motocross rider. When you're in good shape you feel better and will probably live longer . . . and you can leap tall buildings with a single bound and catch that falling safe about to land on the unsuspecting granny's head. But the unfortunate part is that getting in shape is a bummer. It just seems like pointless work.

If you're doing hard physical labor to achieve some easily recognizable goal, it's a lot easier. Say you're unloading a boxcar. You'll sweat and strain, but when you're done, all the stuff that used to be in the boxcar will no longer be in the boxcar. But, for example, if you go out and run a few miles to get in shape for motocross riding, you might expend just as much energy, but you get home and look at your legs in the mirror and they're just as skinny as before, and worse yet, feel weaker.

Also, getting in shape is boring. Again, let's use running as an example. Since the act of running merely involves placing one foot in front of the other in rapid succession, it doesn't require a whole helluva lot of creativity, imagination or brainpower. So you get bored quickly, in about 2.5 steps to be exact. Probably the most exciting thing to happen will be that big dog chasing you, so you have to run faster and be even more bored.

Training also causes mental conflicts. You're running along through the oak trees in Ripoff Park and huff and puff past a park bench, whereupon sits a very well-constructed, lonely looking young woofie . . . with a "come hither" glitter in her eye. Uh-oh . . . conflict. You're supposed to be running, not hobhobbing with the ladies. It took a lot of fortitude and self-sacrifice to even begin a training program, so how can you justify stopping to take care of business? Simply a matter of determining which gland is in charge. And to add to the mental anguish, you're all sweaty and smell like a warthog, not the hot setup for getting close to the opposite sex. What do you do?

Worse yet, getting in shape is dangerous. Have you ever fallen asleep from sheer boredom? This often happens while you're running. It's like doing an endo without the benefit of leathers and a helmet. If you're going to crash while you're running, what's going to happen when you get on a motorcycle?

Another sorry situation . . . running along, sweat, strain, snore, and your mind wanders off to Disneyland somewhere. Before you know it, you've run into a busy intersection right in the path of a truck loaded with anvils. This could really totally screw up your training program.

So far I've only used running as an example, but what about lifting weights. What happens when you're lying down bench-pressing 300 pounds and a rattlesnake comes up and tries to take a bite out of you? There are only two choices. Either you get fanged by a rattlesnake or drop 350 pounds on your head. This happens all the time.

It might sound like I'm trying to discourage you from training to get in shape for motocross racing, but actually there is a method behind my deviousness. I'm going to show you the easy way, the interesting way, the effective way . . . one training program of just a few simple exercises to get you in shape for five, maybe six 45-minute motos a day.

I formulated this program after trying all the conventional exercises. You can only get run over by anvil trucks and bitten by rattlesnakes a certain number of times before you begin to look elsewhere for solutions. The exercises I present to you here are the result of a long and arduous process of elimination. These are the cream of the crop, and I assure you, they will get the job done and are not boring.

Each exercise is designed to develop a certain group of muscles that you need to win at motocross. None require the use of any equipment that the average man doesn't already own, so you won't have to buy any expensive weights or jogging suits. I've given each a clever name, which may someday be recorded in the annals of physical culture (or psychiatry). Go.

1. "The Highway Patrol." Strengthens the upper thigh muscles. A very convenient exercise to be performed while you're driving your car, time that would normally be wasted with useless fretting and quixotic daydreaming.

Use a wide primary or secondary highway that isn't near hospitals, schools or churches. This exercise can be quite noisy. Accelerate to 60 mph, take a deep breath and hold it, then simultaneously push both feet down on the clutch and brake pedals as hard as you can. Hold it until the vehicle comes to a stop, return to 60 mph and prepare for the next rep. An interesting variation is to use the accelerator pedal instead of the clutch pedal. Twenty or thirty reps a day should be plenty.

2. "The Highway Patrol w/Bridge Abutment." This popular "spinoff" from the standard Highway Patrol not only strengthens the upper thigh muscles, but also builds the shoulder and arm muscles and sharpens up the reflexes. Please be cautioned that this is not an exercise for novices. The simple Highway Patrol should be mastered before you try the HPw/BA.

Crawl under the vehicle and disconnect the brake lines on the left side . . . just the left side. Then proceed with the normal Highway Patrol. This exercise is not boring, nor is it especially time-consuming.

3 "Let Your Fingers Do the Walking." No doubt you've been to a party and watched some he-man impress the girls by tearing a telephone book in half. In this case, the book was shredded for the sole purpose of making the man the life of the party. Phone book tearing, however, has a value to the motocross rider that far surpasses its entertainment

value. It's a very good hand, wrist and forearm strengthener.

Don't start by attempting to tear the phone book from a major city, or you'll soon get discouraged. Start out small and work your way up. I began with the Dime Box, Texas, phone book, then I graduated to Kankakee, Illinois, and rapidly progressed to Sioux City, Iowa. Finally I felt up to trying Salt Lake City, and last week I demolished a Cleveland, Ohio, book. Someday I hope to make it up to Manhattan. The energy expended tearing up the Cleveland phone book is roughly equivalent to riding a 30-minute moto, so you can see how it can be a useful training aid.

The LYFDTW, however, takes a little bit of thought. Some riders start out by tearing up their own phone book, then they can't figure out what to do next. Don't tear your own book, you might need it sometime. Why do you think there are phone booths conveniently located all around town? Use your head.

In case you live in small town and run out of phone books, get a library card. For the sake of the environment, please recycle your training implements.

4. "The Girling Slam." Last month, one of the guys on my training program said, "Pete, why don't you make an exercise for us guys who want to get in shape *and* lose weight?"

I replied, "Have you tried the Highway Patrol w/Bridge Abutment?"

"Yeah," he lamented, "but that's too violent. I want to melt the pounds away."

"OK," I agreed, clicking my brain into fifth gear.

That's how the Girling Slam came to be.

You will need one (1) refrigerator, and two (2) Girling shock springs, either 60–90 or 70–100. Mount the springs on the refrigerator door, so they must be fully compressed before the door will open. (Send $5 to Box P, Punkin Center, Texas, for mounting instructions.) Place everything you intend to eat for a week in the refrigerator, and then try to get at it. Use only your bare hands, no baseball bats or crowbars, and you'll soon feel the raw power coursing through your veins.

I instructed you to use progressively wound shock springs for a reason. The refrigerator door can be more easily opened for small snacks, but you'll have to compress the full 90 or 100 pounds to get that turkey or ham out. Eat hearty.

5. "The Condominium." Hours of worthwhile motocross training can be provided by a simple routine task that most people have to face . . . lawn mowing. To get the most exercise value, you should use a hand lawn mower, the kind you push. To get even more exercise value, weld the wheels to the axles. Then go out and "mow" the lawn.

Cont'd. on page 46

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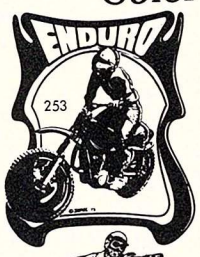

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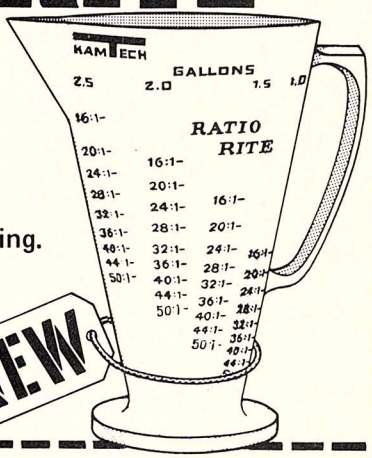

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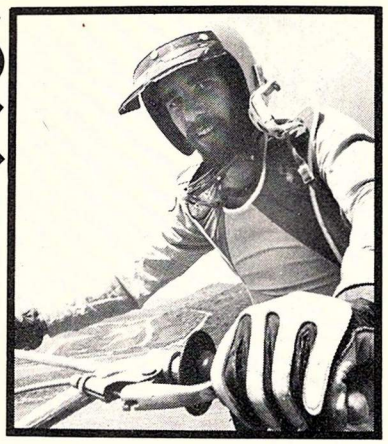

By Paul Boudreau

Sooner or later we all get around to it. You can avoid it for a while but the day's going to arrive when you've got to go out to the garage and actually TEAR DOWN the old pooper. Now I don't mean peeking under the head or poking around the ports or even changing a piston. I mean getting in there up to your armpits and extracting something like the fourth gear thrust washer or whatever. He-man stuff.

D-Day arrived for me at a backwoods motocross track named Central Pennsylvania Motosport Park, because it's in central Pennsylvania near a town called State College, because that's where the State College is. The racing out there is very funky indeed. We used to come all the way from Connecticut to lock bars with the District 6 hot shoes.

It had been a fine summer for me. I had landed a fairly good sponsorship on the hot new Suzuki TM400 (cough) and at the time I was doing well. This particular day I had turned some fast practice laps and had the gimmies for a good finish.

In the first moto I hit the turn about fifth, which wasn't bad because I knew I could at least stay with the guys in front of me. However, halfway through the moto my old bod was coming apart at the seams trying to hold off two eager beavers who were more interested in third place than I was. I really didn't want them to pass me because I had zapped them both in a rather rakish move earlier in the race. Right about the time I was ready to give up the ghost and wave the sniveling backbiters by, that sweet shifting Suzuki gearbox went dead skunk.

Well that did it. A reprieve. I sat there by the side of the track for a while sucking in that fine Allegheny mountain air, letting my stomach settle down to a mild dispute with my adrenal glands. Oh, boy. I did something awful to my poor little tranny. That means I'm gonna have to take it apart. Gulp.

The next day Mario greeted me as usual when I wheeled the patient into the shop. "Hey, Bazooka! You winna come in first?"

Mario is a real neat guy. I worked with him for a whole summer and it was a trip. He was from Sicily and I used to kid him that he learned how to fix bikes by doing it for the Mafia. He always laughed, but he never denied it. He dug the trophies I brought him.

"No, Mario. I lose-a come in last. Gearbox broke."

"You broka da transmission? I cannot believe." Mario was very much in love with his wife, America and Suzuki motorcycles.

"I guess it's broke," I said. "It stopped working and the shift lever won't even move. I think it's really screwed up."

"I tell you, you shoulda use-a da clutch when you sheeft."

Don't I know it. For my thrills, I pay. Well, like Mario says, take apart, look insides, see watsamatta, fix. Of course, that's easy for him to say.

Now the sponsorship worked like this: They got me the machine for practically nothing, gave me a deal on parts, and I did set-ups for five bucks a bike and more or less was in charge of the racing department. If you race like I do, this is a good deal. Anyway, I had to do my own maintenance but I got the use of the shop.

Getting the motor out of the frame was no big deal. I had done it once before when that grand machine conquered boredom by breaking in half while leading a race down in New Jersey. In that particular case I merely picked up the frame and shook it till the motor fell out. However, this time the bolts had to be wrenched out first. Once I got the engine on the bench I showed it to Mario.

"Well, here it is," I said.

"Yeah, but you gotta take apart." Mario made everything sound so simple.

The head and cylinder came off real easy. I then proceeded to remove the pin clip with my genuine piston pin clip removers, the kind made special to remove pin clips. (You're supposed to say "Hubba hubba") The shop had one of those trick piston pin extractors which I hooked up to the air wrench and zapped the piston out in .7 seconds. The clutch, magneto and all the rest of the outside garbage came off with no sweat. I brought what was left over to Mario.

"How's this look, so far?" I said.

"Not bad. Now all you gotta do is take outa da screws and open up." Mario should have been an estimator for the highway department.

I was really paranoid about splitting those cases. I knew a good racer is supposed to be able to tear down his engine blindfolded, but I just never got around to doing it. I was always able to talk somebody else into doing it. There was one guy I knew who was really good at tearing down Bultacos. I used to look over his shoulder and watch him work. Man, he popped those gears and spacers in and out of the cases like an assembler in an alarm clock factory. I could just see myself getting the gears in backwards or leaving out a spacer or something dreadful like that. Remembering the horrible tales of what happens to gearboxes whose spacer has been left out, I started impacting loose the case screws.

When the last screw came out, I realized I had reached the moment of truth. There before me lay my adversary, a Pandora's box of gears and spacers and washers and springs, all waiting for me to open the cases just a crack so they may sproing themselves all over the shop. I consulted Mario.

"Mario?"

"Si?"

"Shouldn't I get some bags or boxes or something to put all the parts in? I mean, how do you keep everything in order? What do you do, string a wire through everything?" The idea of just dumping it all out seemed a bit Neanderthal to me.

"Naw, you justa dump everything out. Here, I show you."

Before I could stop him, he'd taken my cases, cracked them open like an egg and spilled the contents all over the workbench. It was unreal, like knocking over E.C. Birt's toolbox. I noticed two

spacers rolling under the arc welder and heard a spring bounce off a gas tank somewhere in the back of the shop. Mario deftly picked through the pile of debris and came up with a mangled third driven gear. I was destroyed.

"Mario! Look what you've done! How am I going to get all this stuff back inside? I don't know where anything goes."

"Don'ta worry. Use-a da book. It'sa real easy." Good ol' Mario.

Following a Japanese shop manual can be a meaningful experience. Reading their English is one thing, but trying to compare your work with the little one-by-one foo foo pictures that accompany the instructions is like comparing a lion to a pussycat. They look the same, but somehow they don't look the same. The hot setup is to follow the explosion drawings in the parts book, which is what I did.

A few new gears, four beers and a half-hour later I had the cases buttoned up with no parts left over. A remarkable achievement. I had only one close call. Just before I was ready to drop the lid on the whole mess, Mario noticed the shift drum bearing hiding behind the battery charger. It wouldn't have hurt so bad except that this bearing is the first item to go in on reassembly. I'd've made a great brain surgeon.

The engine fired up on the first kick which startled the hell out of me. I

Cont'd. on page 57

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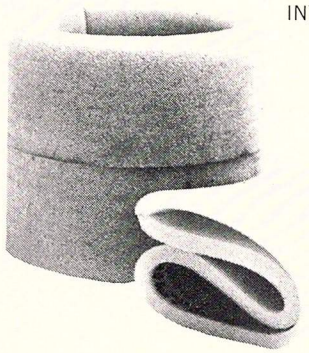

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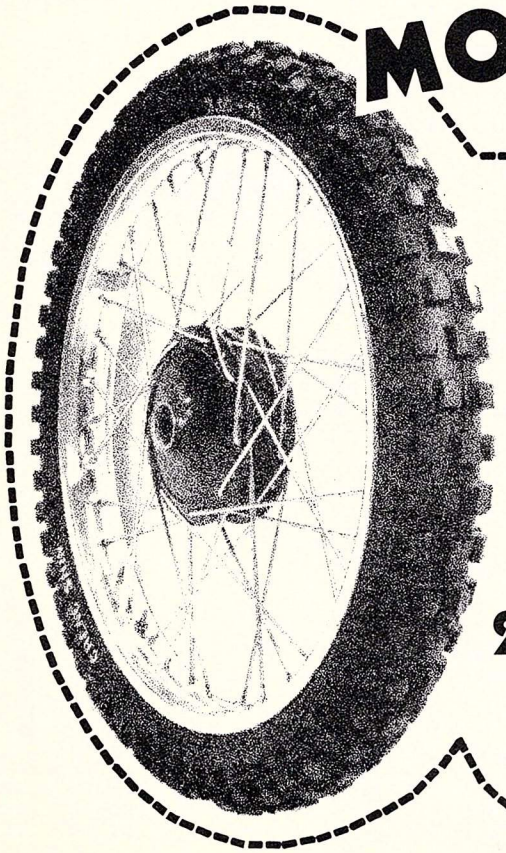

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	☐ Rim: 21" D.I.D.	$32.50	☐ Rim: 18" D.I.D.	$32.50	
	☐ Spokes: 9GA stainless steel, including nipples (3-over lacing pattern	$18.00	☐ Spokes: 8GA steel including nipples (4-over lacing pattern except Husky)	$18.00	
	☐ Tire: Cheng Shin 300 x 21"	$18.00	☐ Tire: Cheng Shin 400 x 18"	$20.00	
	☐ Tube: 300 x 21"	$ 3.35	☐ Tube: 400 x 18"	$ 3.35	
	☐ Rim band	$ .50	☐ Rim band	$ .50	
	☐ Wheel lock (1)	$ 2.00	☐ Wheel locks (2)	$ 4.00	$134.73
	☐ COMPLETE KIT	$74.35	☐ COMPLETE KIT	$75.35	

2. we'll do it

Our experienced staff will lace and true to within ± .010", any of a variety of rims to your hub. You may choose from steel, stainless steel, or chromed spokes in 8 gauge and 9 gauge in a 3-over or 4-over lace pattern. Order now by mailing us your hub and listing your requirements. ☐ENCLOSED 50¢ FOR CATALOG.

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DIRT

MUDHOLE OF THE MIND

In our dealings as motocross addicts, we get a chance to talk to a lot of riders, shop owners, tuners, factory people, and various other crazies and near-crazies. So we pick up a lot of interesting tidbits of information that are not important enough to deserve feature space in MX ACTION, but should get some mention in the magazine. That's why you're reading "Dirt," a monthly column jam-packed with trivia.

"Dirt" will be a loosely structured collection of technical items, things about riders and places, nonsense, irrelevant stories, and occasionally a great truth.

To begin this first monthly installment of wisdom, insight, knowledge and unmitigated gall, let us explain the monthly features in MX ACTION.

****

Have you ever picked up the first issue of a magazine, Volume 1 #1, and found a letters-to-the-editor column? This is truly baffling. How can people write to a magazine before the first issue comes out? Maybe there's something we don't know about, and we'll admit our ignorance, so there will be no "Mail Entry" column this month. Zero letters. As soon as you get done reading this issue of MX ACTION, write us a letter so we can have a letters section in the second issue. Better yet, write two letters; a funny one and a serious one.

****

"Baz's Box" is Associate Editor Paul "Baz" Boudreau's space to use as he wishes. This could be dangerous. You know what we mean if you followed the adventures of Bazooka Pete and Billy Barkfeather in a popular pulp cycle weekly. We could also tell you about how Baz was a big deal motocross rider back East, and how he does so well on a 400 Suzuki with at least 500 extra welds on the frame. But we won't.

Editor Pete Szilagyi, who was formerly associated with an irreverent and informative dirt riding magazine that just so happens to be published by the generous folks who sprung for MX ACTION, continues his monthly dose of inanity in the "Second Stroke."

****

Another column that depends on you is "Wrench Racing," our technical question and answer monthly feature. For the same reason there is no "Mail Entry" this month, there is also no "Wrench Racing." So send us letters asking about any technical problem that baffles you, and we'll call around and find the answer from people who know. And before you ask, there is no way you can put an expansion chamber on a Honda SL-125.

****

Most of the other cycle magazines call their new products columns "New Products." Since MOTOCROSS ACTION isn't your average motorcycle magazine, we'll call our new products "Tricks From The Trade." But they'll still be new products . . . presented for your edification and enlightenment. We'll keep them lighthearted if you promise to tell the manufacturers of the goodies presented in "Tricks" that you read about it in MOTOCROSS ACTION. Such a deal.

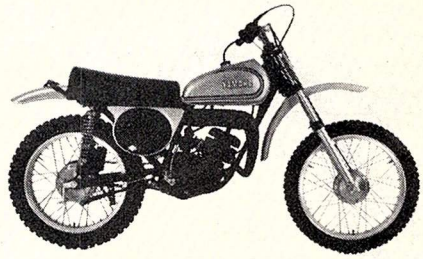
****

FIRST OFFICIAL TECH TIP IN MOTOCROSS ACTION MAGAZINE: CZ owners, *do not* throw away the fiber block beneath the condenser just because you have a hard time getting it back in when you're replacing the condenser. The condenser will vibrate and, in time, short out one of the primary coils, reducing the twin spark ignition to a single weak spark ignition and causing many foul words and rash innuendos against the factory. OFFICIAL FIRST THANKS To Checkpoint Cycles in Reno for spending many days and nights inspecting trashed CZ magnetos before making this discovery.

****

The jolly post lady just tripped through our office and dumped a wad of mail on the desk. Strange stuff . . . a Burpee seed catalog (showing a picture of a guy standing next to a five-foot-tall squash), a Hungarian newspaper (unsolicited and addressed to our editor, who barely knows how to spell his last name, let alone read a whole paper in Hungarianese), a bill from *Sports Illustrated* ("We know you must have forgotten about the $3.95 for our Special Introductory Offer of 32 weeks . . ."), an advertising flier from the local supermarket (Wow, Cornish game hens are only 79¢ a pound, we better rush right down there!), and a Yamaha brochure—printed in Japanese for the domestic market.

Listed on the brochure are two motocrossers that aren't yet available in this country: a 90 and 125. Both bikes are entirely different than the ones you and I are riding. The Yamahas pictured in the advertising have new frames and engines; in fact, nothing looks the same except for the tank decals. They are small versions of the 250 and 360 MXs tested in this issue, even down to the full-floating brakes. Unfortunately, the specs are also in Japanese, but we were able to translate the 125's weight—178.2 pounds, and the local price—195,000 yen, which is roughly $696. By the time they get over here, with the recent devaluations and all, expect to pay something around $750–$800 for one.



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CHAPTER 2,689½ OF THE CONTINUING SAGA OF MUSICAL RIDERS. Last year John DeSoto left Suzuki and went back to his old standby, CZ. Kawasaki can't stand to see a good rider standing next to anything but a Kawasaki, so they picked him up. Mostly because of physical problems, John had an unfulfilling year with them and is now back on CZ.

It's no secret that DeSoto was unhappy with some of his Japanese rides, because many of his machines were factory prototypes that still had some mechanical problems. John is very hard on equipment, so any bike that is not 100 percent will crumble under him. Seems that on John's first ride back on a CZ this spring, he broke the forks off the

bike. Regardless, people who watched or rode against John in his official debut ride at the Trans-AMA qualifier in Phoenix said that he was fast and much, much smoother than in the old days.

DeSoto's decision to come back to CZ was especially fortuitous for American Jawa. Marty Tripes left for Honda, and CZ needed a "name" rider to team up with the newest team member Greg Robertson. Pete Maly, whom you see in this issue riding and sitting cross-legged on the Honda Elsinore, is also being considered for a factory ride. Maly, who has a CZ shop in Costa Mesa, California, will be going to Czechoslovakia this summer to train and ride with the CZ GP team. Now that Mike Runyard has switched to Suzuki, Pete's chances may be improved.

****

If you read the Yamaha test in this issue, you'll remember we mentioned that both of our test Yammies had leaky air filters and were sucking in water. We had the 250 for four months and raced it every weekend, so the engine was beginning to show signs of wear. All the grit and grunge that went through the filter put the finishing touches on the piston ring.

So we bopped down to the local Yamaha dealer, with $6.32 in hand, already knowing that the suggested retail price of the ring was $5. ($6.32 is enough for one Yamaha ring and a six-pack to wash it down with.) To make a long story short, the dealer had "$6.00" marked in giant letters on the box, and no amount of caterwaulling would make the parts man "discount" the part to suggested retail. Six dollars plus 5% tax is $6.30, leaving a two-cent tip for the Yamaha dealer.

Now we're beginning to catch on to how the dealers can sell Yamaha MXers at just a shade above their own cost. They simply make it up on parts and accessories. The particular dealer where we bought our inflated ring is one that discounts new bikes heavily, but all their parts and accessory prices are sky-high.

This is one of the ways the free enterprise system works, but we wondered if Yamaha held their dealers to the suggested retail prices. If so, the dealer who jacks up the parts prices would be violating whatever sort of agreement he has with Yamaha.

"It's their stuff, so they can sell it for how much they want," was Yamaha's response. The moral: The only real price for anything is how much a customer is willing to pay for it.

****

When we drive to the races on Sunday morning, we're just as nervous as all the other guys headed for the same meet. It's called the Early Sunday Butterflies in the Stomach Because There's Nothing Else to Think About When You're Driving to the Races Especially With All the Revival Shows on the Radio and the Tape Player's Busted syndrome. So one Sunday we played a foolish little game and invented a bunch of new motocross bikes that someday might be built. Here's a list of them, but don't rush down to your dealer with a down payment because most of them will be turkeys . . .

Bureaucrat 1004 MX—runs, drinks gas and oil, but doesn't move.

Cheech and Chong Replica MX—two models, one made in Mexico, the other uniquely American. Both are very slow moving.

Stepin Fetchit 100 MX—a great pit bike.

Ziggy Stardust MX—don't take it in the shower with you.

Enchilada Dinner 3.95 MX—put a good silencer on this one.

Ralph Nader Replica MX—so safe that it's boring.

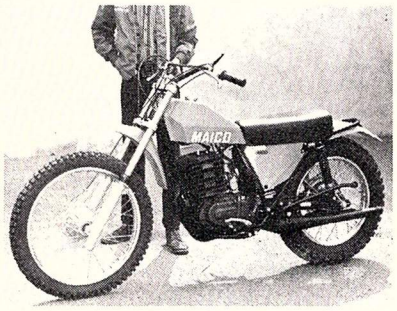
Charley Pride 45 MX—always looks out of place, but its performance is better than some of the standard models.

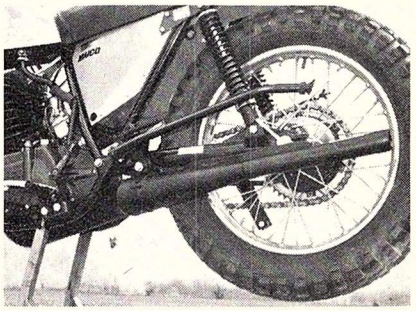
Preparation H .69 MX—has a very comfortable seat.

Led Zeppelin 33⅓ MX—heavy.

Wurlitzer 400 MX—three motos for a quarter.

MAICO MUSCLE $54.95





- Motocross or cross country model.
- Unbreakable rubber mount.
- Tucks between the frame tubes and under the swing arm to prevent crushing.
- Satisfaction guaranteed or your money back.
- Fast delivery with full payment.
- Exchange available for either model.

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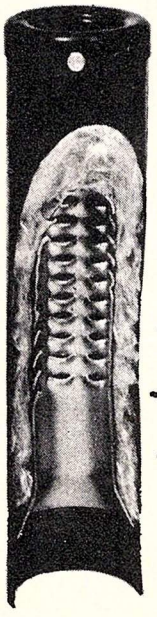

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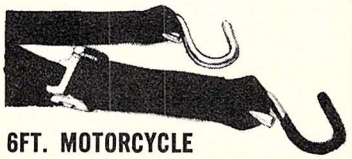

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For all motorcycles. Top quality. Tuned. Small . . . 90-175cc Med. . . . 250cc Large . . . 350-500cc
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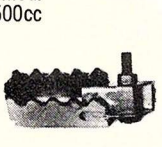
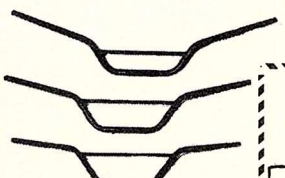


FOOT PEGS
For Yamaha, Suzuki, Kawasaki. **$3.85 pr.**



MOTO-X BARS
Black oxide. 3", 4", or 5" height. All 38" wide.
$12.00 value. $6.95

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Shipping charges C.O.D.

QUAN.	ITEM DESCRIPTION	SIZE	PRICE*

NAME * CAL. RES. ADD 5%
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BankAmericard 12¾ MX—runs best if it belongs to someone else.

Godfather .38 MX—requires weekly payments of $25.

F-111 MX—a crasher's delight.

* * * *

While hanging around Honda's Product Testing and Development department, we got a chance to settle our buns on the 125cc version of the 250 Elsinore tested in this issue. Since we didn't have any cameras hidden in our bow ties, we can only tell you about it. Boy, is it ever light. 177 pounds, to be exact. It looks just like the 250 except for a steel tank that we were told is used to get the bike over F.I.M. weight limits. We're sure the bike will retail for well under a grand even though it comes with a chrome moly frame, magnesium case covers and the same diddly poop kill button that's on the 250. Look for this bike to be fast and competitive.

* * * *

The 500cc Yamaha is not for motocross. This is official.

* * * *

Speaking of Yamaha, the MOTOCROSS ACTION EAR has heard that the same people that make the pianos will be marketing a production version of the YZ motocrosser. This will be basically the same machine Pierre Karsmakers, Tim Hart and Hakan Andersson are riding around. The price tag will be very high, but then again, so's the price of hamburger.

* * * *

the flag, mom, apple pie and our leathers!

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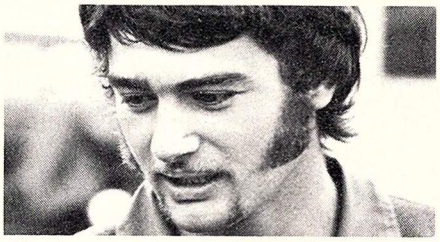


Jim Pomeroy

We still can't get over it. Jim Pomeroy actually WON the Spanish 250 Grand Prix. He beat everybody, dead to rights. Didn't come in second, as you may have heard. Won it. Man, that just tweaks our minds. Talk about a first! It was his first Grand Prix, the first championship race of the season and the first big win for Bultaco since the Spanish Armada. And, of course, the first time an American has ever put it to the *crème de la crème* of European motocross.

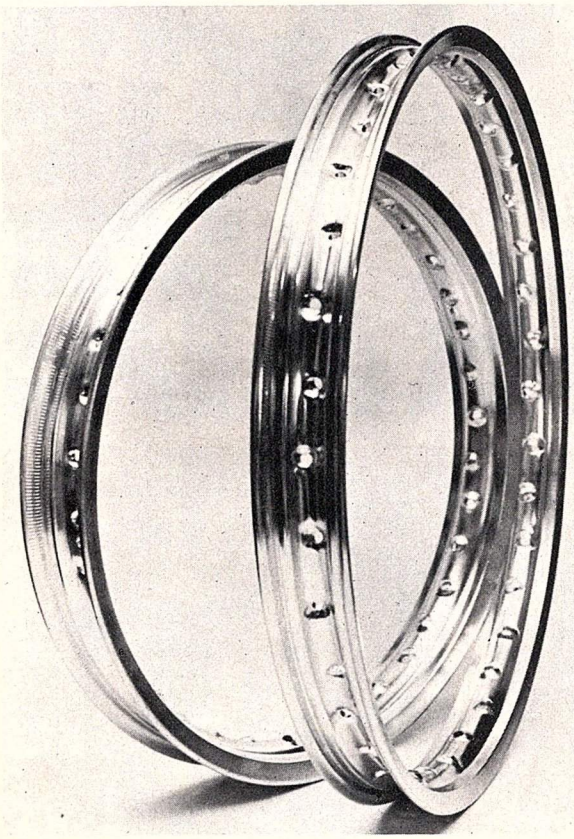
There was, at first, some confusion as to who actually won the race. The initial report we got was that Hans Maisch on the Maico had won overall with Pomeroy second and Adolf Weil third. Then we started hearing conflicting rumors, mainly from the Bultaco people. A quick call to the AMA got everything straight. According to the new F.I.M. scoring system, the riders are scored for each moto: 15 points for first, 12 points for second, 10 for third, 8, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, and one point for tenth. Pomeroy won the first moto (can you imagine what was going on under his Bell?) and came in fourth in the second moto. That gave him 23 points. Maisch took a second and a third which gave him 22 points. Evidently, Maisch was not familiar with the new system and thought he had won because he had better times, so he filed a protest. After the new system was explained to him, however, he withdrew the protest and Pomeroy was declared the official winner. A flip of the MOTOCROSS ACTION flip-up helmet visor to Jim Pomeroy, motherhood, the flag and apple pie.

* * * *

The world is full of surprises. A young Dutch dentist by the name of Gerrit Wolsink finished well up in both motos to take the overall win in the French 500 Grand Prix. It was a surprise to us but not to people who follow the European circuit. Joel Robert was overheard saying that if Wolsink showed up at a sandy track, the World Champion would settle for second because Wolsink would win or crash. It turns out Wolsink ain't bad on the hard stuff, as the Tarare, France, track is a rocky, dusty course. Last year, Gerrit was too busy studying dentistry to devote much time to racing, but this year, as number one man on the Maico team, the big, friendly Dutchman will be seriously contesting the world title. ●

CAT COMPETITION ALLOY TECHNOLOGY

Offers a one year subscription (new or ext.) to "DIRT BIKE," with any order over $30.00 from this page.



Photography by Carl Feichtinger

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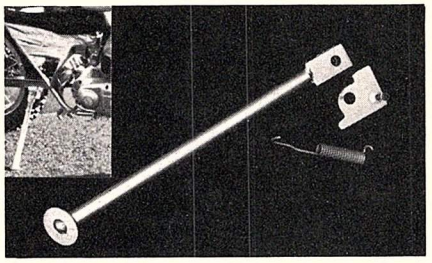
KICKSTAND?

TAKE A BREAK BUT DON'T DROP IT IN THE DIRT!

Weld on a CAT KICKSTAND: Designed to weld onto your bike's swing arm, and to tuck up out of your way when riding. Lightweight, easy toe operation, only 23 oz. of chrome plated, 4130 chrome moly steel.

TO ALL BIKES **$15.95** F.O.B. ANAHEIM



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CAT'S own: Combines real extra strength with light weight. Made from the finest material available (as are all Cat products), these bars are 34.0" wide made from 16 oz. of 4130 chrome moly., .049 w/t, 7/8" dia., Bars are patterned after the famous C.Z. and BULTACO factory team handle bars. They are a must!! item for the serious, competitive, MX-Desert or Enduro rider.

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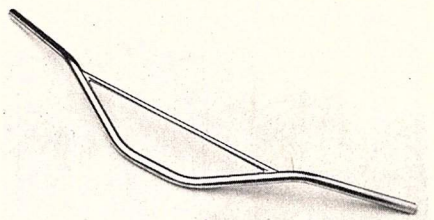

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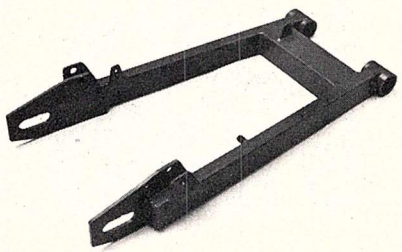
Ride a YAMAHA 125 or 175? CAT'S own swing arm for these bikes weighs 3 lbs less than your stock arm.

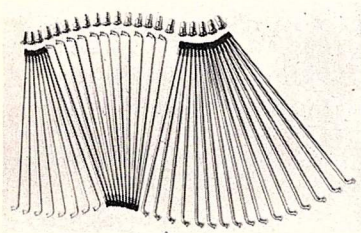
Your YAMAHA will ride faster; easier; and handle better with this big drop in unsprung weight. You'll be more competitive!

Made from super strong rectangular box section steel. No modification required. Simply unbolt your stock swing arm, then use the same bolts to attach this BIG WEIGHT SAVER (and it won't bend).



STANDARD **$45.00** F.O.B. ANAHEIM
1.0" LONGER THAN STOCK **$46.50** F.O.B. ANAHEIM

Watch for next "CAT" ad for more goodies INCLUDING MIKUNI CARB ADAPTORS for C.Z., Husky, Bultaco, and Honda 250. They really go with a MIKUNI.



Lace your new D.I.D. rims to your hubs with our matching spoke kits and you are set to take on the toughest competition: 8 gauge H.D. spoke kits designed to lace into the super strong 3 over or 4 over pattern. See order form for availability.

$14.50 PER SET F.O.B. ANAHEIM

TIRES?

Then be among the first to ride on the new YOKOHAMA "LOW PROFILE" 3.00 x 21 or 4.60 x 18.0" MX tires.

You'll get superb traction for your MX: Desert or hard trail riding from this beauty.

SUPERIOR impact strength: Long wearing. Makes a winning combination used with your D.I.D. wheels.

SIZE:
3.00 X 21.0" **$19.95** + $1.06 EX. TAX F.O.B. ANAHEIM
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PLEASE SHIP ME _____

QUANTITY

_____ D.I.D. RIMS
_____ ☐ 21.0" 36 HOLE
_____ ☐ 18.0" 36 HOLE
_____ ☐ KICKSTAND
TIRES;
_____ ☐ 3.00 X 21
_____ ☐ 4.60 X 18
_____ ☐ HANDLEBARS
SWINGARM
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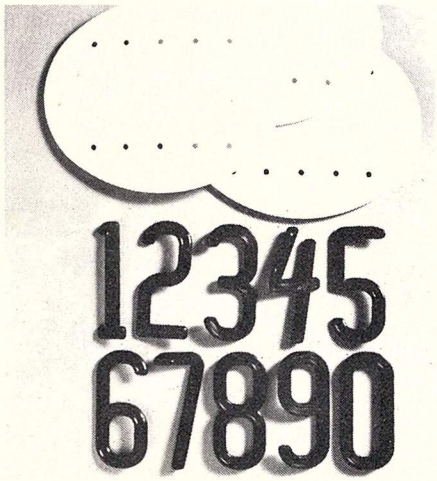
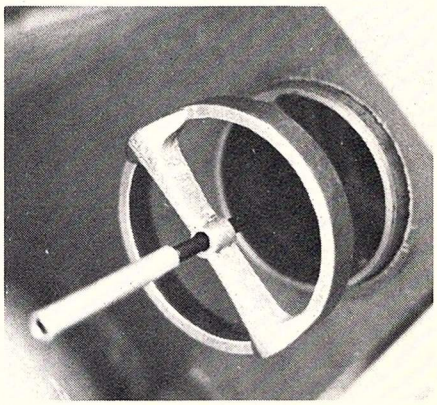


MUSICAL NUMBER PLATES

We've calculated that if a guy joined all the motocross racing clubs in Southern California, he could race every Sunday for six years without hitting the same club twice. Unfortunately, his outlay for number plates would necessitate he work on Sundays to earn extra bread, which sort of takes the fun out of racing. Falcon Enterprises, Inc., 3960 South Marginal Rd., Cleveland, Ohio 44114, has come up with the answer. Their new Falcon Competition Number System comes complete with oval plates, nylon tie straps and a set of molded, high-impact, snap-on numbers. This means you can arrange the numbers to make any combination you want. No more messy stick-ons, sticky paint-ons or messy, sticky tape-ons. The plates and numbers are race proven (?) and meet all AMA and F.I.M. regulations. When you write, tell them you want "MOTOCROSS ACTION Magazine Quick Action Reader Response!"

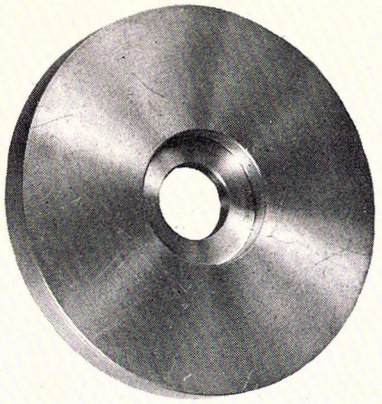
WEBCO BOINGERS

Next time your old bouncers start coming on like a rusty jaw harp, get your hair cut and try to talk your local Webco dealer out of a pair of these new shock absorber units by S&W. They incorporate a tapered piston rod bushing which creates a gradual hydraulic shutoff on the rebound stroke. Very clever. What they're trying to say is, they go squish instead of bonk. The $18.95 each price tag gets them in under most of the competition and you can pick up a set of springs for around five bucks from the same people. For more information and the name of your nearest Webco dealer, write: Webco Inc., 218 Main Street, Venice, California 90293. Be sure to mark your letter "MOTOCROSS ACTION Magazine Quick Action Reader Response!"



GOT DEM MAICO AIR HOSE BLUES?

Every time we turn around, somebody's bad-mouthing Maico air hoses. They tweak, bend, flap and otherwise distort to allow all sorts of track offal inside to eat up the expensive Maico internals. Wheelsmith Engineering sells this little doodad that lets you breathe easier. It fits inside the air box and provides a rigid clamping for the air hose, keeping the grunge out and the air in. For $4.95 it's a giveaway. Drop a line to Wheelsmith Engineering, 3635 W. McFadden, Santa Ana, California 92704. Mark your letter "MOTOCROSS ACTION Magazine Quick Action Reader Response!" and you'll get wicki-wicki answer.

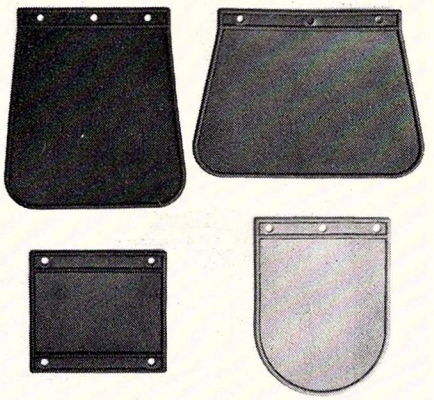


FLY ME

No, this isn't a thrust washer for a 501 Maico, it's another flywheel to calm down your high-revving 250 or 360 Yamaha MX. It's machined from solid brass and it bolts on in actual seconds. The manufacturer claims this little jewel will give you "low end torque throughout all ranges." Find out what they mean by writing Austin & Graydon, 15143 Garfield, Paramount, California 90723. If you mention you read it in MOTOCROSS ACTION Magazine, they'll give you hot service.

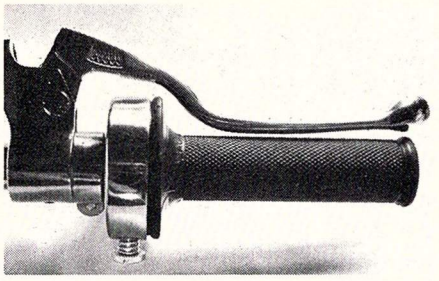
HOME MOVIES

Here's just what you've been waiting for: a camera helmet. Or, a helmet camera, whichever you prefer. It allows an 8mm, Super 8 or lightweight 16mm movie camera to be screwed to your head in seconds. Just like having film running behind your eyeballs because what you see is what you shoot; a frame in the visor shows just what you're shooting. Now you can bring all the action of your next motocross right into your living room. All you add is the mud and the dust and the heat and the rocks. . . . For more information on the "POV Helmet" (for Point Of View, hey hey) write: Gilbert-Waugh Productions, 3518 Cahuenga Boulevard West, Hollywood, California 90068 and tell them you read about their product in MOTOCROSS ACTION Magazine.



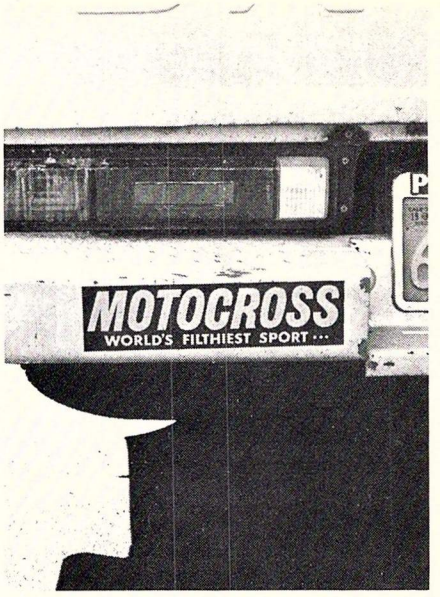
DAPPER FLAPPERS

Now you too can look like Joel Robert with these handy mud flaps from RAHM Engineering. They feature a great big flap and three each mounting holes, or four, in the case of the one with four. Colors available are black, yellow, red, blue, white, green, orange and silver. Sounds like the United Nations. They also come with or without mounting screws which is very bizarre. Drop a line to RAHM Engineering, 640 East 219th Street, Carson, California 90745, and ask them for the flap on their flaps. Oh, yeah. Tell them you saw it in MOTOCROSS ACTION Magazine and they'll ship your order right away.



KOPPELINGSHENDEL

We've known for years that when Magura makes a lever, they make one fine lever. Take a look at the picture. Trick, huh? Now read what the Magura advertising copy has to say about it: "As picture number 1 shews, the lever moves in an elegant arc over the heusing of the throttle grip and then bends closely parallel to the grip cover. Both the brake and the clutch are easily and effectively used, since the part of the lever which the index and middle fingers grap for, is 8mm closer to the grip than with the stretched lever shapes." What more could we say? As usual, the Magura items are forged aluminum and will not break. Drop a line to Magura, Gustav Magenwirth KG, D-7417 Urach, Germany, und tell zem dey VILL giff you kvick serfass becauss you are MOTOCROSS ACTION Magazine reader.



TELL THE WORLD

If you've got any room left on your van after you've applied all the Do It In The Dirt, Dirt Bike, STP and Corn Cob Racing Team stickies that designate your truck as an official motocross transport vehicle, you'll surely want one of these bumper stickies from Posterior Graphics. For those of you who can't read, it says: "MOTOCROSS—world's filthiest sport," and it's available in their choice of color. Why don't you get a whole bunch of them and stick 'em on every car in the neighborhood. They'll love you for it and so will we. If you tell them you heard about it from MOTOCROSS ACTION Magazine, there's no telling what good things might happen. Write: Posterior Graphics, P.O. Box 25004, Phoenix, Arizona 85002. Isn't there a deodorant named Ariz?

Manufacturers and distributors are like your favorite motocross machine. They work fine but to get them going, you have to kick 'em a few times. Now we don't advocate such Neanderthal behavior, but to get super-quick action when writing the man about products you see in this column, be sure to note in your letter and on the envelope, "MOTOCROSS ACTION Magazine Quick Action Reader Response!" This way you'll ring a few bells.

The man, the machine, and the moola.

PISTOL PIERRE

The name of the game is winning and, if you kiddies have been doing your homework, you know Pierre Karsmakers has been playing the winning game since the day he first planted knobs on U.S. dirt. The Florida series seemed to be just a practice session as he ripped first place moola in five of the seven races. On the way to the West Coast, he stopped off in Phoenix to pocket the 500 pro class of the Trans-AMA qualifier held there. The Hangtown hoedown was a hollandaise mow-down for the Flying Dutchman—both motos. It seems this man is doing what Ake did in the '72 Trans-AMA, namely to establish himself as the top rider competing in this country. And he's doing it without even getting his pits wet.

We were able to hog-tie Pierre for a few hours at his glass and plastic headquarters, Yamaha International in Buena Park, California, just long enough to burn off a reel of tape and a roll of film. Munching a Danish (what else?) and slurping a steaming cup of machine-made mocha-java, he was relaxing in a stainless-steel-and-leather armchair, gazing out at Yamaha's million-dollar putting-green lawn and contemplating his new role as a gentleman racer.

MOTOCROSS ACTION: Why did you decide to move to this country?

PIERRE KARSMAKERS: Ummmm . . . , why? that's a difficult question. Well, Yamaha wanted to have somebody, a European, to train some American riders, show them how the Europeans train, how they prepare the bikes and how they prepare themselves for the races and they probably knew that I always train hard. They knew that I had some experience and they wanted to have somebody teach another American team rider how to do it.

MXA: That's Tim Hart, right?

PK: For now it's Tim Hart, yeah. They were planning to have some more riders, but, they changed their plans after they signed me. But next year there'll probably be some more riders—but this year they are just looking out at what's going on and as far as now we're doing pretty good.

MXA: How do you train?

PK: Many ways, but that's what I have to teach Tim Hart, too. It's very difficult to teach somebody something, because everybody expects the other guy to do good in two or three weeks already. It takes at least a year. Tim trains consistently. I mean, when I'm there, he trains all the time. He had some bad luck in Florida. His bike blew up a couple of times and he crashed several times and he hurt his shoulder at Daytona—the first heat, so he had some bad luck. But, still, you know, he does good.

MXA: He's a hard rider. When you and Tim train, what do you do?

PK: I always like to train where there

KARSMAKERS

are many trees . . . where it's green. I went out to train this morning myself, around here, running—smog . . . I couldn't even eat breakfast this morning. I was almost ready to throw up. We don't run much, just, I think, about four miles—maybe five, I don't know. I don't have a meter on my legs. But, we run about an hour. Plus we exercise a lot. We have many exercises. They are to make your reflexes good, plus to make your body supple, you know, so that certain ways when you are in trouble on the bike you can move to get your balance.

MXA: You have to be able to do that at the end of the race—in the last lap as well as the first lap.

PK: That's why training is so important, because if you are tired your concentration gets bad also. Then you can't make decisions. That makes you make more and more mistakes all the time.

MXA: How did you happen to start racing?

PK: When I started, I didn't have anything at all, you know? I worked in a petrol station and I worked in a little shop where they make tents to get some money to buy a little bike and start riding.

MXA: What made you want to buy a bike?

PK: Well, my uncle—he used to be a champion from Holland—two times, and he was once, I think, third or fourth in the World Championship—that was called then the European Championship. He didn't have very good physical condition, but he was very clever in the race . . . and that's very important.

MXA: What kind of bike did he ride?

PK: Matchless. He was a factory rider every year for seven or eight years and he was a very good rider. He coached me for the last five years. I learned a lot from him—preparation for training in the week . . . trying to stay interested all the time. We train two days a week—Tuesdays and Thursdays and every week the same. That makes you tired. So you have to have some ways to keep you interested.

MXA: What kind of bike did you first start riding? Was it a Matchless?

PK: No, I've never ridden a four-stroke. I started on a Greeves. It was a 250. One of the first ones.

MXA: With spring forks?

PK: Yeah. I finished second in the National Championship the first year. Jo Lammers was first. Then I bought a Husky.

MXA: You *bought* your first Husky?

PK: Yeah. That was, I think, seven years ago now. Yeah, seven years ago. It was a good time.

MXA: Did they give you any help?

PK: No. Nothing.

Photo by Charles Morey

"Brad is a very good rider . . . very clever. I think within a while he'll be very good."

MXA: What did you do with it?

PK: I did pretty good there. Ummn, I think that year, '67, six years ago, I got Champion in the 500 Class, but that was on a CZ. I bought a Husky and only rode it a couple of months, then I joined CZ and the year after that, '67, I got Champion in Holland.

MXA: On the CZ?

PK: On the CZ . . . beat everybody. They called me, at that time, World Champion Starter. Every Grand Prix I rode, every big race, any race—I had the best start . . . the lead—always. And nobody could beat me in the start. I

just kept it open and everything was so easy then. I thought everybody was slow, you know . . . at the start and my bike wasn't even fast. It was just a stock CZ, a two-piper . . .

MXA: Ahhh, good handler.

PK: Yeah, very good. I even beat Adolph Weil and he is known for his good starts, too. But since then I haven't had many good starts. Now on the Yamaha, I'm still learning, I'm still trying different ways. I think I have the way now. I think I finally got it.

MXA: How did you get your Husqvarna sponsorship?

PK: Bill Thomas of Denver was over for Edison Dye a few years ago. I broke my CZ in the morning, I think it was the gearbox or something—it was an International Race in Belgium and he told me . . . ". . . well, I'm not going to race today—my ankle or my knee hurts . . . ," yeah he had a cartilage problem. He said, "Why don't you ride my bike?" I said, "Oh, it's a Husky." And he said, "Try it. You don't know, otherwise you don't race and you have no fun today." I said, "Okay, I'll try it." So I put different handlebars on and I changed the brake lever and all of that to how I would like it. So, I won that race. I won both heats. Two 35- or two 40-minute motos. That was very tiring. I didn't feel tired at all on that bike, so I thought, "Hey, that's a good bike." That was on the four-speed, of course. So, well, I bought me a Husky. I didn't get an offer from nobody, so I thought, I'll buy one, what the hell. So, then I got many good results on the Husky. And last year I won St. Anthonis and Launsdorf and beat Roger DeCoster and beat Joel Robert. Nothing to it.

MXA: Did you ride for the Husky factory then?

PK: Kind of. We had a gentlemen's agreement. I didn't have a contract. They supplied me with all the parts—but no contract.

MXA: Did you have any regrets about leaving Husky after having ridden for them a long time and coming to Yamaha?

PK: No, no. I like my bike so much, my Yamaha.

MXA: How is your Yamaha setup? What's good . . . what's bad?

PK: Everything is good, really. I can't say one thing that's bad. We have one problem, but, that's probably still my changing from the Husqvarna shifting to the Yamaha shifting. I'm used to lifting my foot on the CZ and heaving it in gear. So, I really have to be careful with the gearbox.

MXA: Find sometimes that you kick it out of gear?

PK: Yeah.

MXA: How about the power; the way the Yamaha power comes on with no flywheel? I'll bet that you had trouble getting into that.

PK: No, I like that. Oh, once it's in fifth gear it goes so fast. Oh, unreal. It's a light bike, too. It's just the way I like it. The first day that I rode on the Yamaha I said, "That's my bike." It suits me. It can do everything that I want with it and no problems. Plus, I have good support. I have a mechanic now and no problems. I can train whenever I want—it's so good.

MXA: You rode a Kawasaki a few times last year. Why didn't you sign with them?

PK: Ummn, because the Yamaha deal was better.

MXA: Oh. How did the Kawasaki bikes differ from your Yamaha?

PK: Well, the Yamaha, you have to ride it different. The Kawasaki you ride with very low revs. I think the Yamaha handles much better than the Kawasaki, but, it's all up to the person who rides it. Like, Brad. He likes the Kawasaki like it is. And, I kind of liked it also, but I wanted to have more changes done to it. I wasn't sure if I was going to sign, so I didn't tell them what to do yet. So I decided, well, I'll wait. Then I signed with Yamaha and here I am.

MXA: And you've done very, very well, too.

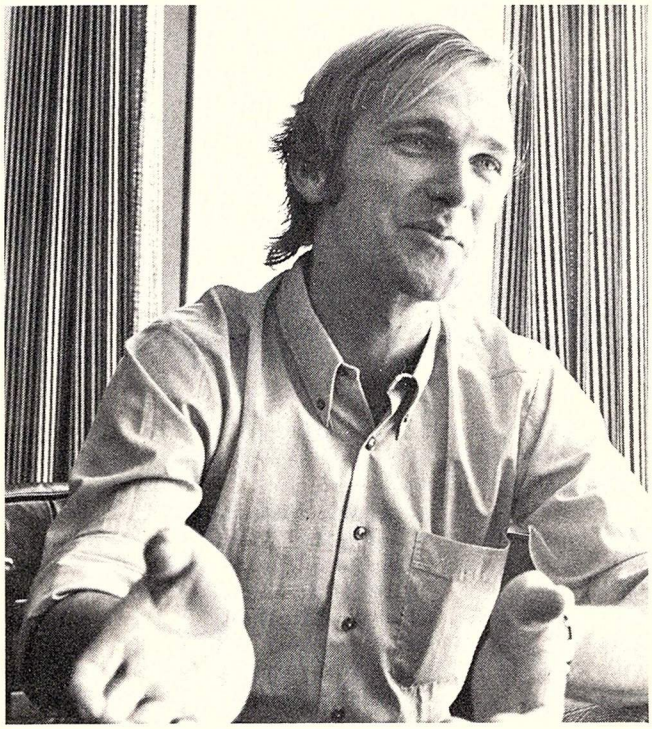
PK: I won five out of seven races in Florida. I should have won seven out of seven, but the first race in Orlando there was so much water. Water got in everywhere. We just weren't prepared to that type of weather then. The races were very tiring because of the sand. Tallahassee was a hard track, but it was tiring because Brad and me were going so fast. We both were gassing it like hell . . . (Laughs).

MXA: How is Brad?

PK: He is a very good rider . . . a very clever rider. I think within a while he'll be very good.

MXA: We heard that when Brad was riding in the Florida Series he wasn't really trying. Do you think that he was riding as fast as he could ride?

PK: I'm sure he was. Because I saw his face at the start many times. I was observing him. And I know for sure that



". . . Jimmy Weinert, he's a funny guy, he was drinking beers in this restaurant and he said to me . . ."

"I like my bike so much, my Yamaha . . . once it's in fifth gear it goes so fast."

Photo by Charles Morey

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"I won five out of seven races in Florida. I should have won seven out of seven . . ."

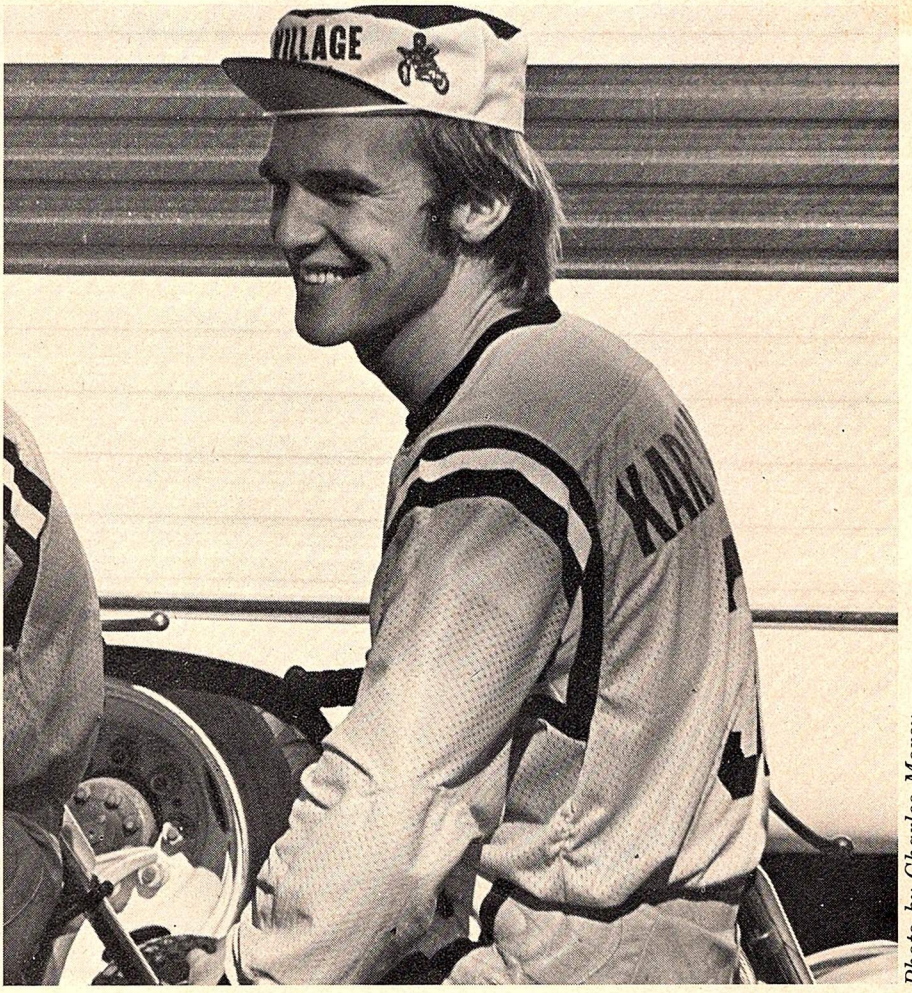

Photo by Charles Morey

he was trying hard. He wanted to beat me so badly. And that's normal—I like that, because when I beat them it's good for them, because that makes them go faster. That makes them train harder—that they are not the best . . . there are more people who can go faster. So that makes them work. So I think that is only an advantage for them. But, also, it's getting more and more difficult if you win a lot, because you run into problems. In Florida I noticed I had several riders I was lapping two or three times and they catch you, you know, they try to race you when you're lapping them. It breaks your rhythm. You throw the bike into third speed in that corner and you shift into fourth, into fifth, then back into fourth—you're in the rhythm, you know, three times for 30 minutes and then they try to run you off the course and they try to shut the door when you're lapping them. That's what I don't like. You never see that in Europe. In Europe they're polite. In Florida, ohh, it was really terrible. Why do they do that? I'm faster, so what the hell? Train, train harder. Try to beat me, but don't try to beat me when I'm lapping you.

MXA: They want to be able to go back to their friends and say, "Hey, Karsmakers tried to pass me and I held him off for half a lap."

PK: That's dumb.

MXA: That's what they do in this country.

PK: But that's not sport! In Europe we have the signs, you know.

MXA: Signs???

PK: We get our signs from the mechanics—we know the whole race what's happening. So we know when we get lapped. So we pull over—we put our hand on this side so you can pass . . . they don't do that here . . . Of course, the sport is still very new here and they have to learn a lot, but, you know that you have to be polite, also. You are not in the race to hurt each other. It's a sport and it should stay a sport. Not a kill race.

MXA: In this country, like, say for example the Florida Series, the difference in speed between the slowest guy and the fastest guy is probably a lot wider than in Europe. In other words, people are more equal in ability in Europe.

PK: That's true, that's true. I think, that, like in Florida I know that there's many riders who come out to the race who don't train, just ride the race and so, of course, they don't have the condition to stay in the same lap for 30 minutes.

MXA: That's why everybody wants to get into that first turn first. The first turns were murder in Florida.

PK: Yeah, I took it easy in the starts, always, in Florida. I had two or three times I gassed it at the start and wanted to take the risk, but I took it easy. It was very wild there. When I see that I don't have the lead in the start . . . I see what's happening and I had better slow down, because I know that I'm going to catch up with them later, after ten or 15 or 20 or 25 minutes. That was my policy there. I didn't want to get hurt, because the season is long. The Florida season wasn't that important—the most important for us and Yamaha is the Summer Series and the Fall Series. I don't want to break a leg at all. I want to play it sure, I think that's the best way to do it.

MXA: Are you gassing it down the hills like all the other best riders?

PK: I think so. I like downhills because I know that I can pass people. And, sometimes I race on a course with a hill that I don't like and somebody else is faster, but I like downhills. You have to try to stop at the bottom.

MXA: Of course, the bikes you ride and the bikes we ride . . . your bikes stop. Our bikes don't stop.

PK: That's true. You have to have good brakes. The shocks have to be good. Everything has to be good. You have to be good, too.

MXA: We heard one story that you were psyching out all the rest of the guys really badly throughout the Florida Series.

PK: Psyching out . . . what does that mean?

MXA: That means that you were trying to put them in the wrong frame of mind for racing.

PK: That's probably something that they just made up themselves.

MXA: Somebody told us the night before one of the races in Florida you brought over a whole bunch of beer to Brad Lackey and the other guys who were working on their bikes.

PK: No, that was the race at St. Petersburg, I believe. The Saturday before the race, Jimmy Weinert, he's a funny guy, he was drinking beers in this restaurant and he said to me, "Do you want a beer, also." I said, "Why not—a

Cont'd. on page 65

Motocross is Big Stuff

AT MOTOCROSS TRACKS ALL OVER THE WORLD, RIDERS ARE BANGING HANDLEBARS WITH VISIONS OF BECOMING A SUPER-SHOE.

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LOOK AT YOU

You sweaty, stylish devil

Though you pass by the golf course on your way to the track and chuckle at all the old duffers wearing Arnold Palmer golf shirts and o-fish-ul Sam Snead two-tone shoes, you're probably indulging in the same sort of fashion-consciousness. Not all motocross riders wear the same gear, but there is a standard costume that happens to be the most fashionable. Mostly, these pieces of protective gear are popular because they work . . . and they're what the shoes wear. Who knows, maybe next year we'll all be wearing Bozo the Clown outfits and helmets painted like watermelons. Honk.

Silly looking but effective duckbill visor. Rapidly being replaced by Hallman flip-visor, since the Europeans first wore them in Inter-AMA '72.
Bell Magnum helmet.
Number of dollars this man has left after buying all this stuff.
Carrera goggles, not too dustproof, but very photogenic.
Moustache (optional). A drag when you're eating hot pizza.
Jofa rockguard.
Long hair (optional). Not the hot setup for tax accountants, clergymen, or presidential candidates. Keep it away from moving countershaft sprockets.
Hallman jersey, but the perforated nylon units are the only way to go in the summer.
Your name and sponsor printed on back of jersey. SOL if your name is Alfonso Guitteirez and you ride for the Angry Armadillos Racing Team and Long Distance Moving and Storage Open 24 Hours, Nacogdoches, Mississippi.
Hallman GP chest protector, good advertising space.

Hallman gloves.

Be skinny (optional). Helps when you lose your house keys at the track and have to climb in the bathroom window when you get home.

Hallman GP "leatherpants."

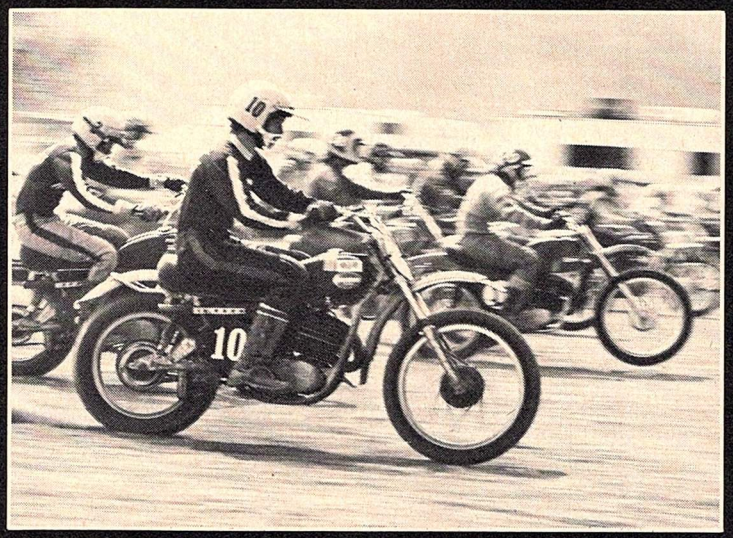
JT Sox, available in more weird flavors than Baskin-Robbins.

Full-Bore boots.

Arroyo 125ers duke it out at 14,000 rpm

WORLD CUP WARMUP

By Pete Szilagyi



Spectating at a 125 Novice race is one of life's most wondrous pleasures. Some guy will zoom past you on a trick Penton, then a rider on a stock enduro bike with the brake light and turn signals flashing, maybe next a 1959 Ducati with knobby tires, or a thrashed Triumph Tiger Cub fixin' to eject its crankshaft. Hairy indeed, because the 125s have always been considered the "Beginners" class. Out-of-the-crate 125 race bikes are cheaper to purchase than the big-bores, and lots of hopeful MXers are likely to own 125 enduro models, which they figure are the hot setup for their first few motocrosses. Additionally, the 125s seem to be easier to ride, further enticing the rank (sometimes very rank) novice.

There are a couple of serious misconceptions here. The 125 motocrosser may be easier to buy because of its low initial cost, but the upkeep on a 125 is usually more expensive than similar maintenance on a big-bore. High-winding engines and constantly shifted gearboxes wear out quickly. The temptation to fiddle with a 125 to extract more horsepower results in highly-stressed engines that are prone to premature self-destruction. You can budget race in the 125 class, but you won't win.

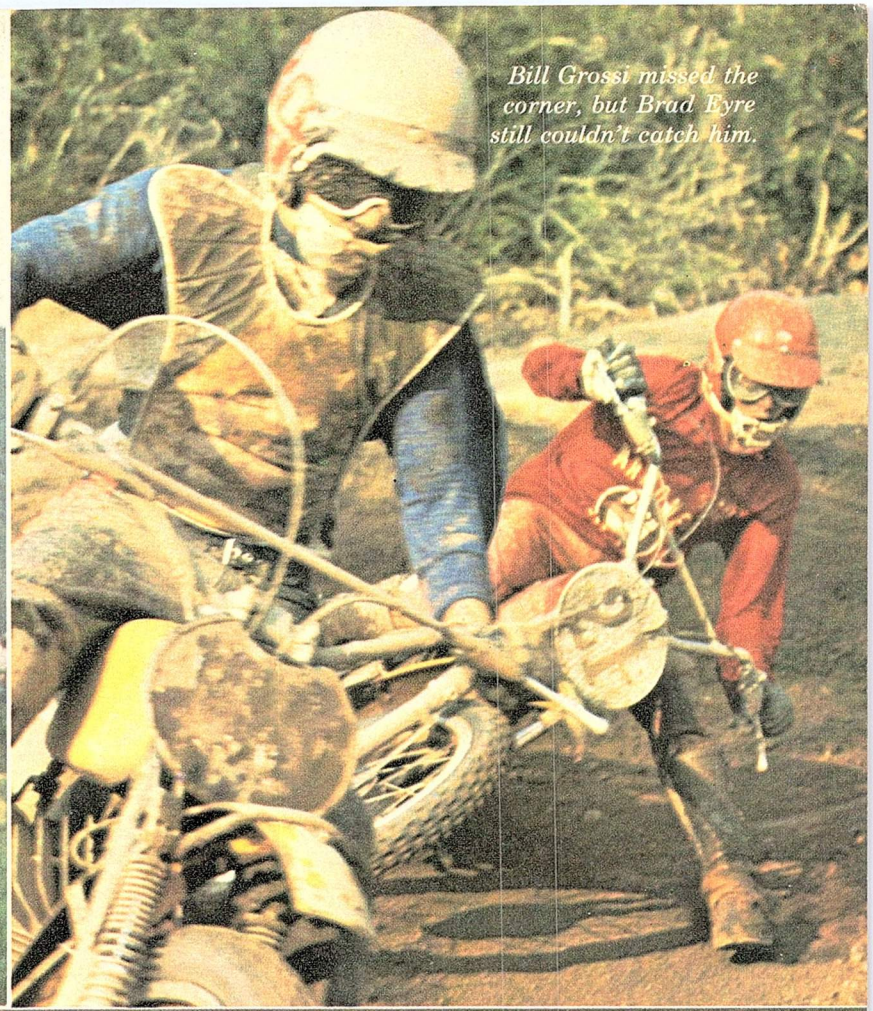
Some guys ride the smaller, less powerful machines because they claim that they are less likely to "spit them off." Which is true to a certain extent, but one might get the impression that, because of the lower top speed, 125s are easy to ride. They are easy to ride slow, but very difficult to ride fast. Even a box-stock 125 motocross bike will have a peakier powerband than a larger-engined bike, consequently the rider has to be overall ratio conscious and pay a lot more attention to what gear fits what situation on the track. All this means that you have to shift a 125 a whole buncha times each moto, which leaves a greater margin for error. Keeping a 125 in gear and on the pipe is hard work, especially on a bike with an exotic powerplant. Don't be so unrealistic as to think you can win a 125 Pro race on a stock motorcycle. And the greater the degree of grinding and gouging that's been done to the bike's innards, the harder it is to ride.

Like healthy motocross enthusiasts, we've all strolled through the pits at an International race and indulged in our own type of Sunday worship services around the exotic factory machinery, but more likely than not, the 125s pitted at Arroyo were more perfect masterpieces of motocross engineering than some of the heavily publicized iron. The bikes at Arroyo were very, very trick, probably with porting and combustion chamber designs more esoteric than anything Joel will ever ride. You have to appreciate the handiwork of those 125 tuners. They don't have the factories' expansive budgets to work with; the process is to buy cylinders and pistons by the six-pack and blow up engines until you get it fast and reliable. Mr. Sachs and the guy who makes his pistons are in love with the 125 class.

Lately, winning on a 125 is being considered an end in itself, and the class is no longer a group of beginners or those who don't feel up to riding the 250s. In Europe, there is not only one 125 Grand Prix tour, but two running simultaneously. This country has a number of 125 specialists who may occasionally race the big bikes with hot

Marty Smith might have been 125 National Champ, but he tried too hard and went down.

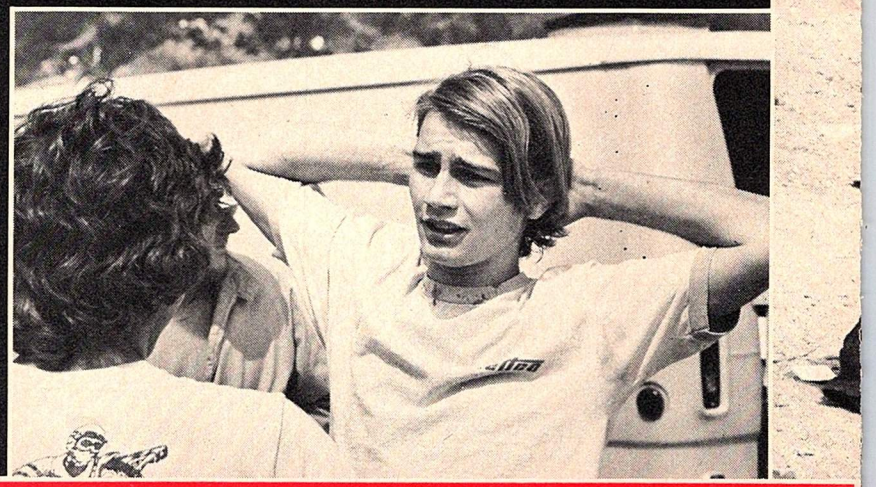
Bill Grossi missed the corner, but Brad Eyre still couldn't catch him.



Yamaha AT MXs weren't the hot setup for Arroyo's endless whoopdies.

and cold results, but are virtually unbeatable on 125s. Tom Rapp is a good example; so are Bruce Baron, Chuck Bower, Larry Watkins, Bob Brooks, Terry Clark, Ken Zahrt, Dave Rodgers, and Ray Lopez. If the annual Trans-AMA tour had a 125 International class instead of the 400 class, the list of winners would be much different. Many feel that 125 class racing is an American specialty in which the Europeans are not as advanced. That's why the FIM 125 GP this August 5th in St. Louis is going to be very interesting. Could be that Ray Lopez or someone like him will be the first American to zap the visiting Europeans.

Chuck Bower, scoring.



Bruce McDougal, stretching.

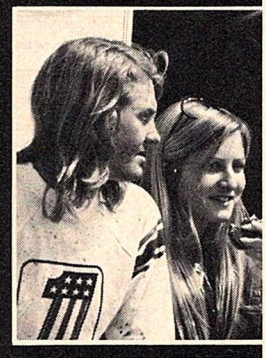
125 motocrossers have never had a championship event to sort out the super riders from the very competent riders, nor do they often have a chance to race for heavy-duty bucks. In Pro motocrosses that include a 125 class, the distribution of purses has always favored the glamour classes. The 125 National Championship at Arroyo Cycle Park in San Bernardino, California, was significant because it brought together a goodly number of top 125ers from the western half of the country, and it paid a total purse of $3,200, a grand of it to the winner. This may seem like a mere pittance when compared to the $10-15,000 available in the big AMA/FIM money 'crosses, but it was one of the largest purses ever offered to 125 riders. Better yet—zero sharing with the 250s and 400s. Snobbery works both ways.

Arroyo's 125 National Championship was not at all official as far as the AMA is concerned. You may have suspected by now that the AMA and FIM are getting short-tempered with promoters who use the expressions "National Championship" or "Grand Prix" in their advertising, but since there is no official AMA 125 Championship series, Arroyo can say what it wants.

In order to cut down the 88 entrants to a more reasonable number of 33 for the two 20-minute finals, three qualifying motos and a consolation heat were run. There's little glory in winning a qualifier, so the race could be considered won by placing in the top nine finishers. Then if you still didn't win, they advanced the top six consolation finishers. The hard part was keeping those engines and gearboxes in one piece until the finals.

Everyone except numbers one through eight wanted the number nine position badly, and a few names never made it because of crashes or breakage. Chuck Bower won his qualifier the easiest, mostly because he's Chuck Bower and has a hard time not winning. Six riders transferred from the consolation moto won by Marty Smith—unknown outside of his home town San Diego. . . .

The hills are green with Pentons. Number 3 is Chuck Bower, who got careless for a split second and paid $400 for it.



Terry Clark, listening.

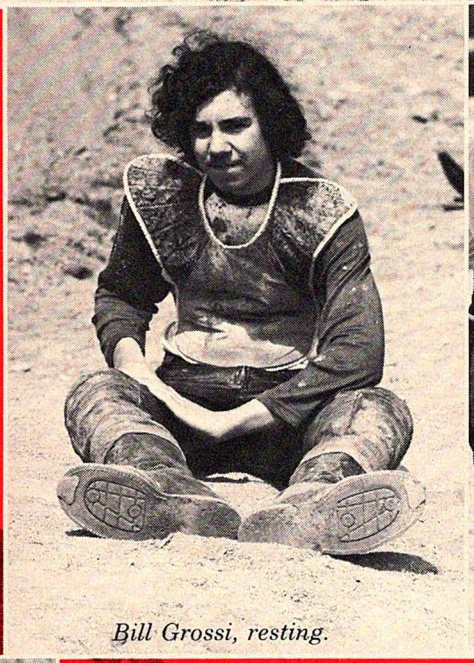
Arroyo's long straights are worn into lazy whoopdies, each one like a small jump. Texan Mike Johnson kept the power on the ground and passed fellow Monark rider, Steve Gerber.

"Who's that guy number 2? Damn he's fast!"

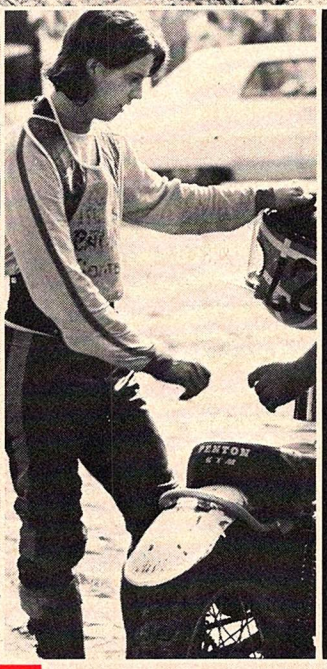
"Says Marty Smith on his chest protector."

"I know, but who's Marty Smith?"

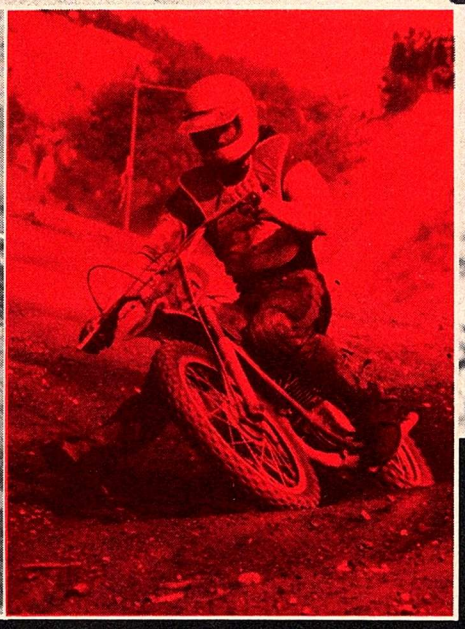
Next was Mike Johnson, the Dallas 125 king, then Jim Cooke, enjoying his first ride after the broken arm suffered



Bill Grossi, resting.



Bill Payne, anxious.



Ray Lopez, unofficially the 125 National Champ.

Ken Zahrt, explaining.

at the Carlsbad Trans-AMA last fall, and Morris Malone, who made AJS whatever it is in California—aboard a Noguchi-Yamaha, and finally another Texan, Mike Harrington.

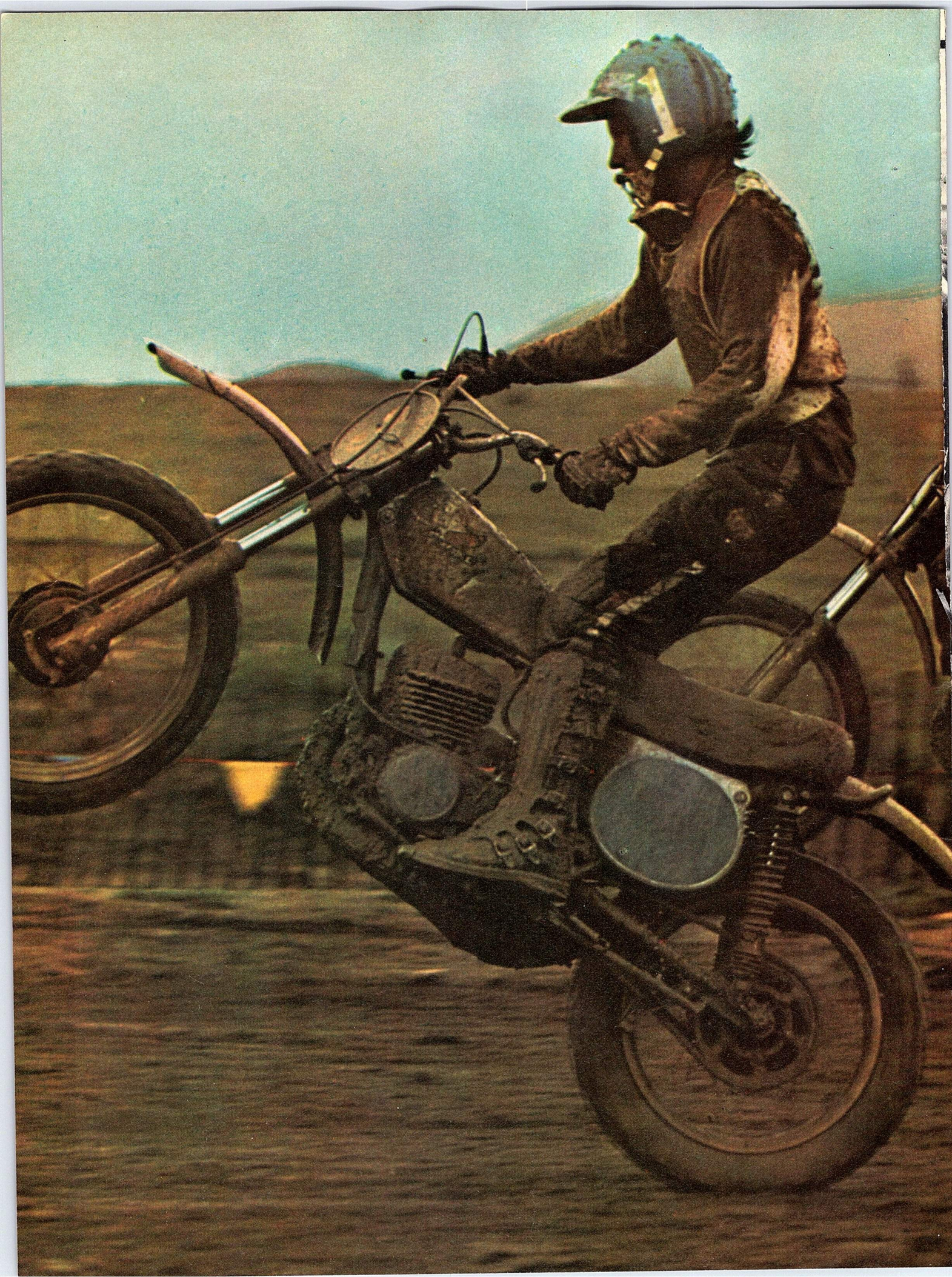
Judging from the starts of both motos, Billy Payne should have won the $1,000. His Zundapp-engined Penton took an easy lead, and Payne was making it a runaway, especially in the first moto. Bill is well-known as a rider who either crashes or wins, and today he opted for the former. In moto one, he was being pursued by the Team Mettco Pentons of, Chuck Bower and Bruce McDougal (remember him from the Yamaha ads a couple of years ago?), when his bike started hopping over the whoopdies and flung him off. His misfortune allowed an easy victory for Bower and shadow McDougal.

Payne again ate it in the more hotly contested second moto, but this time he took factory Harley rider Terry Clark with him. Ray Lopez, fourth place finisher in the first moto, won the second and last moto of the day, but not before Bower slipped down on the last lap to lose several positions and $400.

Marty Smith was a good bet for the overall. After finishing third in the first moto, he got a respectable start in the final, but was a little too stoked and crashed hard on the first lap. Several other riders who figured to play a big part in the day's racing never entered the chase. Ken Zahrt on a Pursang ran well in his qualifier and was up with the leaders in the first few laps of the finals, but he soon tired and fell back to the middle of the pack. CZ's newest factory rider, Greg Robertson, was "the first to sign up and will be the first across the finish line" according to the promoter, Ted Moore, former head of American Jawa West. But Robertson's riding was lackluster and his pit men were scowling that he had lost ten positions in the first moto because of scoring errors. Incidentally, Greg's CZ was being billed as the "world's fastest 125 CZ," and on the exterior at least, it barely resembled the stock item. Jimmy Beauchamp, a graduate of the CMC "Blood, Sweat, and Tears College of Famous Motocrossers," and Terry Clark's HD teammate, rode with a cast on his wrist and tired in the last half of each moto. Beauchamp's Harley was so tricky that it made Robertson's shiny CZ look like a mud turtle. Larry Watkins may have been in contention if he hadn't had to ride a stock Rickman Enduro, supplied to him by sponsor E.C. Birt to "see what was going to fall off the thing." The lights and speedometer hung on, but the engine's power fell off.

Ray Lopez was the fastest, and consequently the richest, 125er at Arroyo. Everyone else learned a whole lot. Chuck Bower learned that falling down on the last lap is very costly. Hodaka and Suzuki debuted their 125 motocrossers (Combat Wombat and Challenger) and discovered some weak points in their machines, though Bob Brooks rode his Hodie to "first Japanese bike" at seventh overall and Jim Hoover took eighth on the Suzy.

Now it's back to the garages and workshops to molest the bikes even further in preparation for the first big 125 meet with the Europeans.



The 250 Elsinore

Honda updates the 305 Scrambler

The bike is a paradox. First, you figure, it's a Honda. As long as memory serves, Honda has never produced anything you would call thrilling for motocross. The CR250 is a thrilling motocrosser. Next, it's a two-stroke. Honda said they would never produce a two-stroke. The CR250 is the fastest 250 two-stroke in the business.

They call it the Elsinore. Its namesake, the Elsinore Grand Prix, is something nobody cares about anymore. The Honda CR250 Elsinore is the most talked about thing in motocross since Torsten Hallman.

There. We did it. We blew our load. You know it all, now. We tested the Honda and we dug it. Right down to the last man. It's kinda tough starting out a brand-new magazine with a test like this. You really want to show that old "tell it like it is" flash, and you get handed a machine you can't find anything wrong with. C'est la typewriter.

Our acquaintance with the Elsinore goes back about a year when we first heard about a two-stroke the Honda factory in Japan was messing with. The news came from one of those funky weeklies from England that show outrageous photos of outrageously secret-type motorcycles taken by miniature cameras hidden in spark plug wrenches. Anyway, the thought of a Honda ringding tickled our collective fancies and our funny bones. Can you imagine some poor Honda engineer trying to design a valve to fit a transfer port?

The idea was intriguing. Many felt the Honda name just didn't mix well with two-cycle oil. Others felt: Sure, why not? Honda can do anything. Look what they did a few years ago in European Grand Prix road racing. If they decide to build a two-stroke, they'll probably build the best one in the world. We watched and listened.

A few months after the news first got out, we saw the pictures. The bike looked absurdly clean, almost like a wooden mockup. Maybe it was. Whatever, it sure got jaws flappin'. Have ya seen the new Honda? Looks super-sano. Got them trick rims that don't clog up and them fins on the shocks. Real slick.

We figured the bike would be a goer. Honda's always been sorta funny like that. They move along not saying or doing anything and all of a sudden they pop something incredible on you. Like: "Murmur mumble torsion bar valve springs mumble murmur four-cylinder 750 mumble disc brakes murmur etc." So in order to keep their thing together, they had to build a motocrosser that would be better than any of the others.

One thing was for certain: Honda would not be competing with the other Japanese factories. The Americans did not want to see another "almost" motocrosser come out of Japan and the Honda people knew it. They were out to lock bars with the European bikes and were hanging the cost.

The Elsinore just snuggles up to snotty berms.

Their second goal was to produce a motocrosser that was ready to race out of the crate. We know people who make their living telling other people how to prepare expensive motocrossers so they won't disintegrate on the third lap or flip upside down off the jump. Most people can expect to spend anywhere from 50 to a couple of hundred dollars getting their new bike on the track, no matter whose name is on the tank.

With all the hoopla preceeding the release of the bike, we expected the thing to come down from the sky on a gold satin pillow. It didn't. They just started showing up. And the word started coming. They said it was fast, light and a real fine handler. So by the time our turn came around to test it, we figured it might be a magic machine. But we didn't start our test with any preconceived notions.

The first thing we noticed when sitting on it was its extreme lightness. The method we use to test a bike's weight characteristics is to lay it down on its side and pick it up again. Since, in an actual motocross, we might go through this procedure several times, it gives us an accurate indication of how much trouble the bike's mass will be. The Honda Elsinore weighs 214 pounds dry. For real. This is the lightest 250cc motocrosser we've picked up.

Starting is no problem, once you get the hang of it. The seat/starter lever/footpeg relationship seemed a bit off to us at first but the effect soon wore off as we became accustomed to the machine. The best way to go about lighting it up is to bring the lever down to about half stroke, then kick it through. The motor starts quickly and cleanly and the lever folds neatly out of the way. Very nice.

It takes the motor a few minutes to warm up, a great opportunity to sit there blipping the throttle and watching the reaction of people around you. The motor really sings. The note is loud and distinctive and it's all coming out the back end. There is very little engine noise. It sounds like a cross between an Ossa and a CZ, if there is such a thing; crispy and crackly but pulling down low.

Once the engine warms up, the throttle response becomes instantaneous. A flick of the twister and the revs are right there. It's like zap zap every time you hit it. Zero flywheel. The Elsinore uses an ET ignition system with a rotor the size of a champagne cork, which seems to be the hot setup from Japan these days. This should work fine if an engine is getting its torque thing together but in most cases the absence of flywheel effect makes a motor into a screamer with no grunt at low r's.

The Honda is different. Its engine design hits the proverbial nail on the head by putting usable power everywhere in the rev range. It does come on the pipe somewhere, but the revs climb so astonishingly fast the rider doesn't notice any rush of power. Figure that one out.

And it's smooth. We rode three Elsinores and they all had that rock solid feeling, completely free from vibration. One of the biggest problems in building high revving racing engines is how to contain the tremendous vibrations these mills produce. Honda licked the problem very neatly by using great big engine mounts, three layers thick of chrome moly steel, and meaty mounting bolts with aircraft-type locknuts. Honda riders need not worry about their engines falling out or their frames shaking apart due to bad mounts.

The bike gets away at an incredible rate for a 250. It's very fast for any class bike. We ran off a series of hole-shot dealies with anybody who wanted to get into the act. There was a good cross section of 250 and 500 class machines on hand, so it gave the Honda a workout. We ran a few drags, played musical bikes and ran a few more. The Honda seemed to have the edge in get-up-and-go, as it showed up first at the turn more times than it didn't. We think the bike could do it every time. The trick is how you do it.

We found second gear starts were the fastest, although a rider has his pick of the first three. Jam the clutch, look for traction and, when it grabs, start hitting the shifter and don't stop till it peaks in fifth. If you rely on your "shifting instinct" you'll over-rev, because it winds up faster than anything you may have ridden before. Keep the revs down and the power will pull the machine and give much better control.

All this fine power comes from a very plain looking motor. It's all black anodized, in keeping with the latest fashion, and it carries along that fine old Honda tradition of using cheap Phillips screws in its super-sano magnesium (hubba hubba) cases.

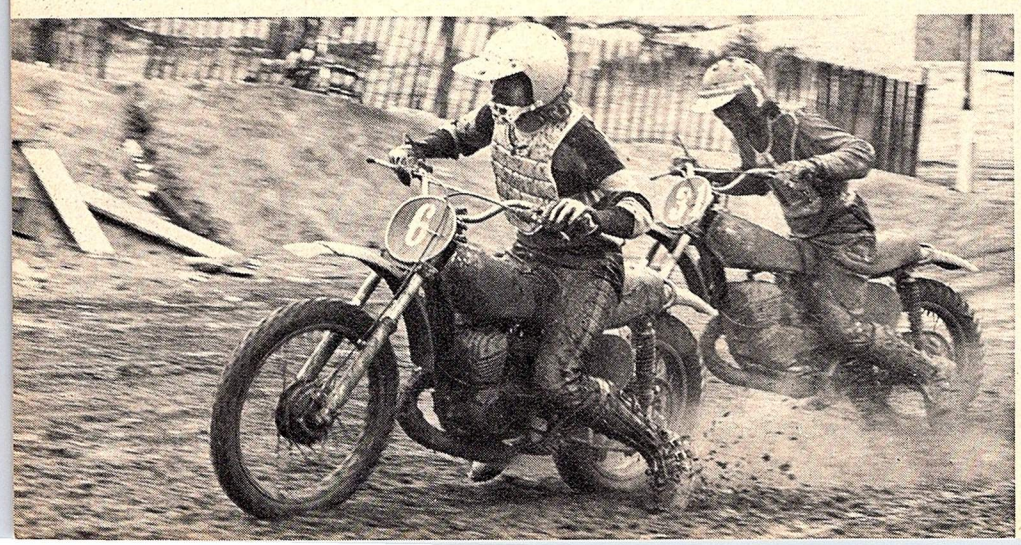
The head has a single plug hole right on the top. Very clever. We're glad to see this approach. It's unbelievable what some people will put in the "other" hole of a two-plug head.

Woa, and it's got a Keihin carb. Keihin got together with Honda to develop this little gem especially for the Elsinore. It's the picture of simplicity, light as your tax refund and works so well that we'd like to strap it to another machine just to see what happens.

The real secret, however, is in the ports. Ultra-trick. With two intakes, four transfers and a huge bridged exhaust, there is no wasted space in the barrel. The transfer ports are ground very wide around the side of the liner, actually overlapping the vertical plane of the intake ports—which are, by the way, staggered up and down to provide, now get this, maximum intake exposure without hanging up a ring. It seems that when all the grinders stopped buzzing, there was no place left to slide the ring end gaps, so they put them directly over the intakes. This means when the piston moves down, both ring gaps will stop just short of a port. The piston is also

Cornering the Honda in the soft stuff is a trip. Even though the rider was on the tank, the front end stayed light and the rear wheel got traction.

Off the line the bike is a slingshot. Nothing like stuffing a 400 with a 250.



ported to scavenge the area directly behind the skirts. It's all quite advanced and we were very impressed.

Shifting is another thing a new Honda rider will have to get used to. The throw is short, quick and positive, a far cry from the long pump handle throw of the European bikes. The gear dogs are cut in a dovetail fashion which insures positive locking once the cogs are engaged, but also requires the rider to blip the throttle at the exact moment he shifts or the gears won't slide apart. Shifting under full power or while decelerating will get you absolutely nowhere. Also, when cornering hard to the left, the shift lever will sometimes touch down and, because of the short throw, will dial in a neutral. We suggest fitting the lever in the highest position possible to insure it doesn't get hit accidentally.

Riding the Elsinore is a very pleasant experience. It treats you well and makes you feel like Joel Robert. Geometry is perfect for its weight and powerband, and the lightness of the machine will add a few minutes to your "flank speed" situations. To say the bike handles better than any other machine on the market is debatable. There are many people who will ride the Elsinore and feel it doesn't handle as well as, say, the CZ. We've ridden some very good handling motocrossers and we feel the Honda is as good as any. To avoid the question of better or worse, we'll simply state that the weight of the machine is what is going to make the difference. This means that all else being equal in a long moto, the rider on the Honda will hold the edge because he can outlast the competition.

The forks are beautiful. Not as nice as Cerianis or Betors but they're a heck of a lot lighter and they still do what they're supposed to do. A couple of our test riders said the forks bottomed when landing off a big jump in a nose-down position. Now we all know we're not supposed to land in a nose-down position, but try to tell the bike that when you hit a jump with the power off. In 90 percent of the cases, however, the Honda forks, with their 7.1 inches of travel, will iron out anything short of a herd of grazing armadillos.

This seems to be the year the Japanese realized there was something to this shock absorber business after all. The four-inch travel shocks fitted on the Elsinore are strong, light, work fine, stay cool and are completely rebuildable. Don't throw them away.

Jumping the bike is a stone gas. The rider can keep the trajectory flat and low for speed or he can go for the long, crossed-up sky shots to impress his girlfriend. Pegs are placed low and well back and encourage the rider to get off his butt and move around. The bike rewards you for being good by catering to your every whim. Handling is precise enough so the rider can pick the bad line to gain an advantage without worrying about a trip into the bottle caps. Even under hard braking, the rider can flick the machine around to pick up a different line and never get the feeling he's losing the handle.

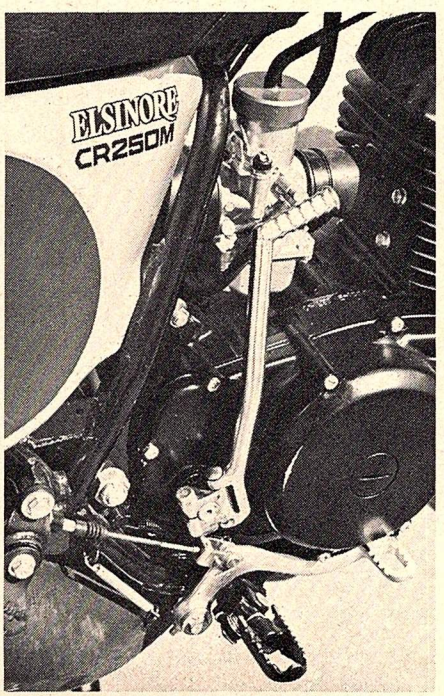
The 57-inch wheelbase makes the Elsinore the longest in the business. Normally, the longer the wheelbase, the slower the handling of the bike. In fact, the first pre-production prototype tested in this country cornered like a battering ram. So Honda changed the angle of its forged aluminum fork crowns to bring in the trail. This change plus the Elsinore's presto power turns the bike into a cue ball.

Cornering the Honda is textbook. Hold the gas on till your pants tell you it's time to shut down or pay. Squeeze the binders and plant the front wheel while you climb on the gas cap and turn up the wick. It's surprising how fast the machine gets you in and out of the turns, and the faster you push it, the better it responds. Again the lightness comes into play.

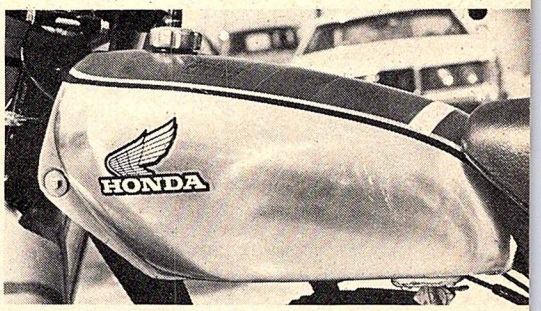
At one of our destruction sessions, a test rider came to grips with himself in a turn and let the gas roll off. You know how it is. You're hooking it right on the lip of a berm and you suddenly think, "What the clank am I doing here? I'm going to die!" This realization is usually accompanied by instantaneous shutdown. Anyway, this test rider did just that. When you shut the power off on the Honda, the long wheelbase takes over. In this case the front end bailed out over the rail and started tracking on the other side of the berm. This is no way to impress your sponsor, so the rider, quickly seeing the error of his ways, dialed in the ponies and hauled the wheel back to the working side of the berm. The bike just kept on truckin' like nothing ever happened and the rider came out smelling like a rose with only a second or two lost in the turn. It's this type of machine response that can make you into a winner, because it lets you improve without turning you into hamburger.

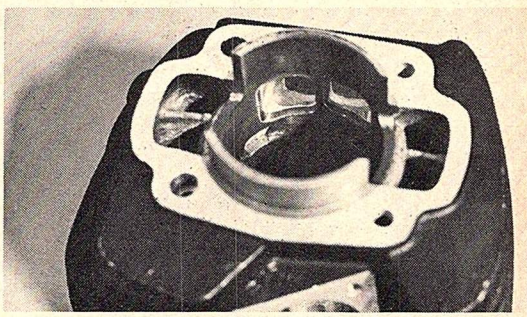
The machine's light weight makes mid-air maneuvers a snap. Here MXM's test racer drops his front wheel to frighten the other rider.

34mm Keihin gets the juice in. Pegs and brake lever are perfect. No accessory items needed here.

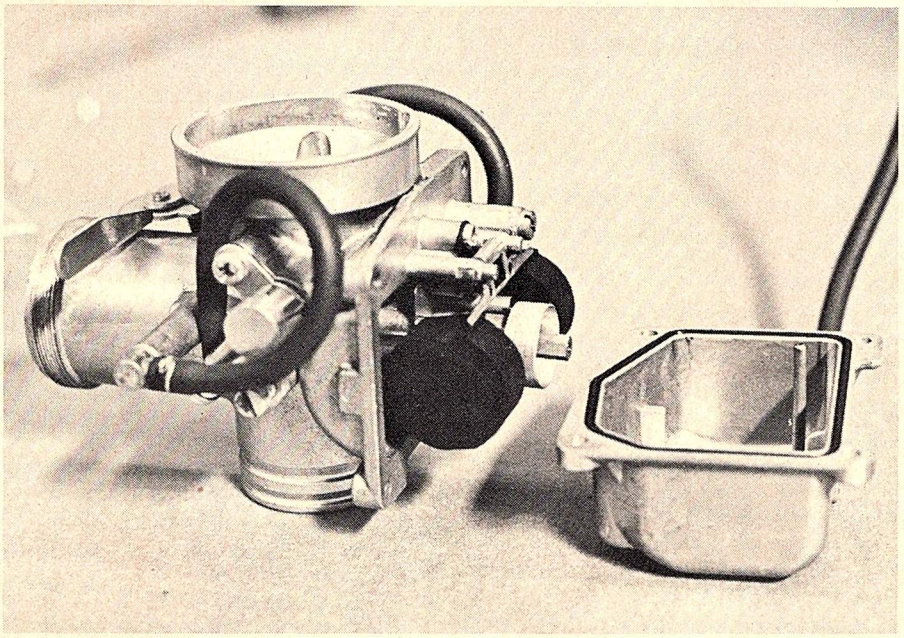


You get this super-trick alloy tank with each and every machine.



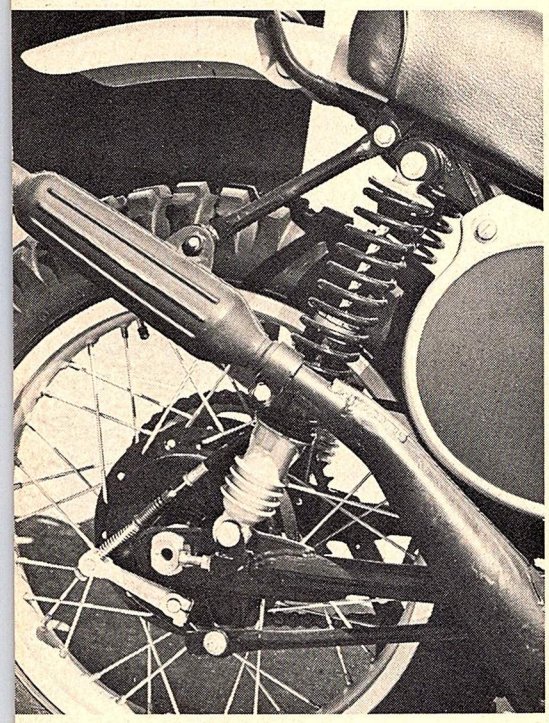


Very slick porting will make you want to rip off the jugs at every opportunity to show your friends. Note the wide transfers and staggered intakes.



This Keihin is a carb fancier's dream. The O-ring (looks more like a "D" to us) keeps the super-light body dry and the solid foam floats won't sink.

For you weight-conscious racers, here's how the Honda keeps its girlish 214-pound figure. The frame, swingarm and handlebars are made of chrome moly steel, which is both lighter and stronger than the mild steel used in most production motocrossers. Frame construction is very clean without any of the braces, junction sleeves and other hangers found on some machines. Most of the aluminum pieces are forged which means a lighter, stronger component. The tank is alloy, just like the trick European works machines. The seat only weighs four pounds, which is mindtweaking. Most specialized accessory manufacturers are hard pressed to build a lighter saddle for anywhere near the price. The engine weighs only 64 pounds, part of the savings coming from the magnesium case covers. Rims are the super-neat DID flat alloy jobbies which keep the wheels from gaining weight on a muddy track. A great deal of weight saving comes from plain good thinking. Body parts are soft plastic, axles are drilled, spokes are tapered; an ounce here and an ounce there, it all adds up. Honda even had the tremendous audacity to leave off the oil pump.



The spokes are built up around the hubs for strength. Shocks are really good, silencer is loud but within AMA requirements.

Years from now, the 1970s will be known as the period when the Japanese factories experimented unsuccessfully with oil injection on their motocross racers. We hope. The function of an oil pump does not justify its weight or reliability factors, and it just makes better sense to mix your own. The Elsinore requires you do just that. Hallelujah.

Air filtration is excellent. We tested the Elsinore for a whole rainy, sloppy, muddy day without sucking any garbage into the carb innards. When we tore down after the test session, the slide was clean and there was no sign of grit in the air chambers. We ran the next test on a hard dusty track and again no sign of any leakage.

Our test bike fouled two plugs during the test which kinda added to the charm of the machine. Most Japanese motocrossers are running rather warm plugs that never seem to foul, but the Honda is using a B9EV, which is a relatively cold platinum tip item. Just like in the old days, the rider will have to keep his eye on the sparker and change the little booger at the slightest hint of persiflage.

The 34mm Keihin carb is very responsive to tuning which brings us, believe it or not, to the Honda's owner's manual. Most owner's manuals are nothing more than instruction booklets on how to get the thing started and devote page after page to subjects like where to put the gas, how to steer, when to wash and which brake to use first. When it comes to tuning, most just tell you to use the factory settings. The Honda manual goes into it a bit deeper. Its pages are chock full of tuning information like what the different needle positions do and how to jet for different climate conditions. There's even a section on slide cut-aways. It has to be the most comprehensive owner's manual we've seen.

To say the Honda 250 Elsinore is the be all and end all of motocross machines would do the sport a serious injustice. We will say the Honda is the fastest, most complete 250 you can buy. The rest is up to the rider. The Honda will crash, run out of gas, foul a plug, break a chain or lunch a motor just like any other bike. But if you ride it just once, you'll fall in love with it. We did. ●

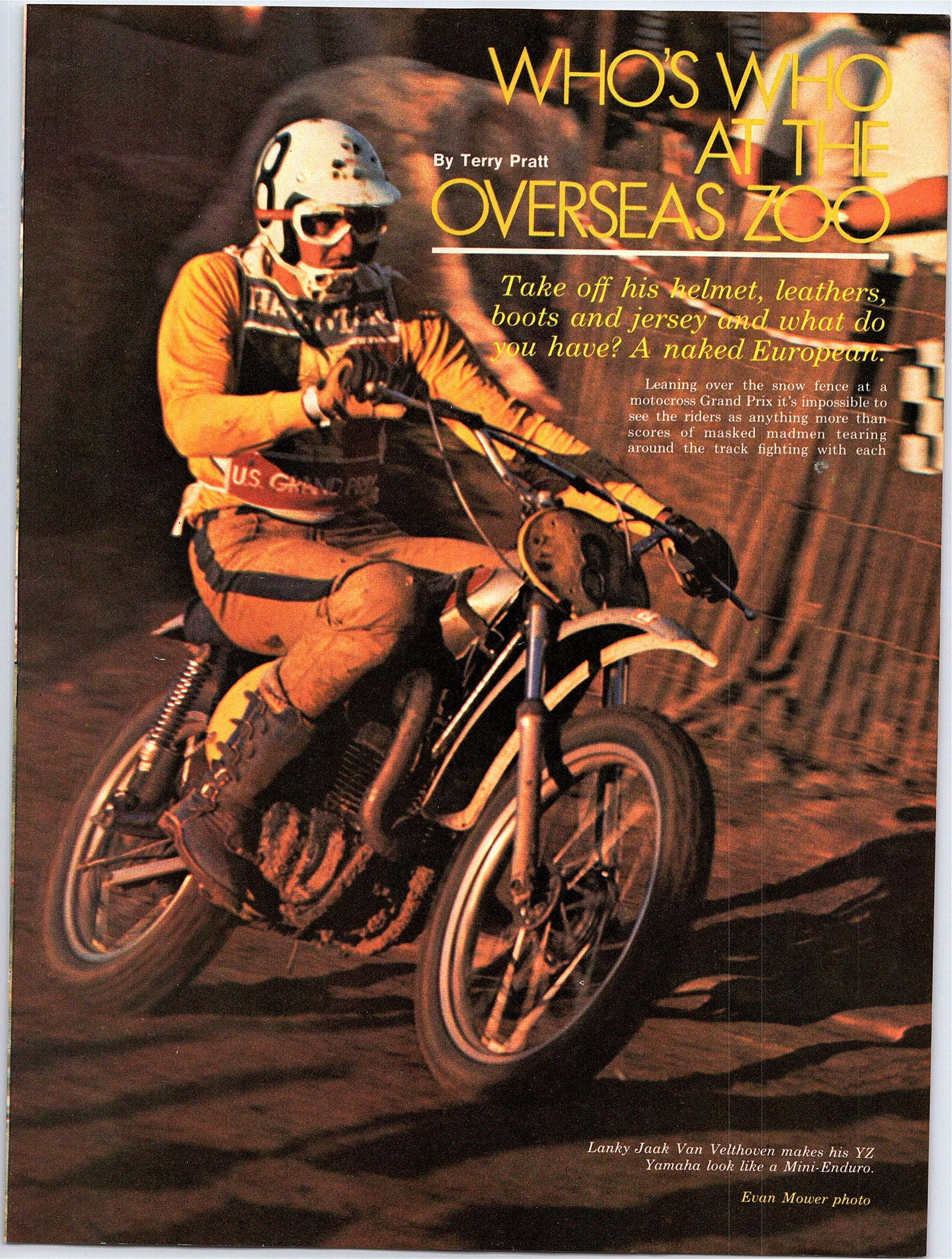
HONDA ELSINORE
SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE: $1,145
ENGINE TYPE, INDUCTION: Two-cycle, piston-port
ACTUAL DISPLACEMENT: 248cc
BORE AND STROKE: 70 x 64.4mm
COMPRESSION RATIO: 7.2:1
CARBURETOR: PW34 Keihin
CLAIMED HORSEPOWER/RPM: N/A
PRIMARY DRIVE: Gear
GEARBOX/SHIFTING: 5-speed, left side
GEARBOX RATIOS: 1)2.055:1 2)1.571:1 3)1.250:1 4)1.037:1 5)0.862:1
AIR FILTER: Oiled foam
ELECTRICAL: Flywheel magneto
LUBRICATION: Pre-mix
FUEL CAPACITY: 1.8 gallons
SUSPENSION: Honda
TIRES/RIMS front: 3.00x21 Dunlop, DID alloy rear: 4.00x18 Dunlop, DID alloy
WHEELBASE: 57.1 inches
SEAT HEIGHT: 32.7 inches
WEIGHT actual: 216 pounds claimed: 214 pounds front wheel: 98 pounds rear wheel: 118 pounds
STARTING: Primary kick, right side
COUNTRY OF MANUFACTURE: Japan
DISTRIBUTOR: American Honda Motor Co., Inc. 100 W. Alondra Blvd. Gardena, California 90247
COST OF REPLACEMENT PISTON, RINGS: $11.40, $3.20
COST OF REPLACEMENT LINER AND/OR CYLINDER: $72.

WHO'S WHO AT THE OVERSEAS ZOO

By Terry Pratt

Take off his helmet, leathers, boots and jersey and what do you have? A naked European.

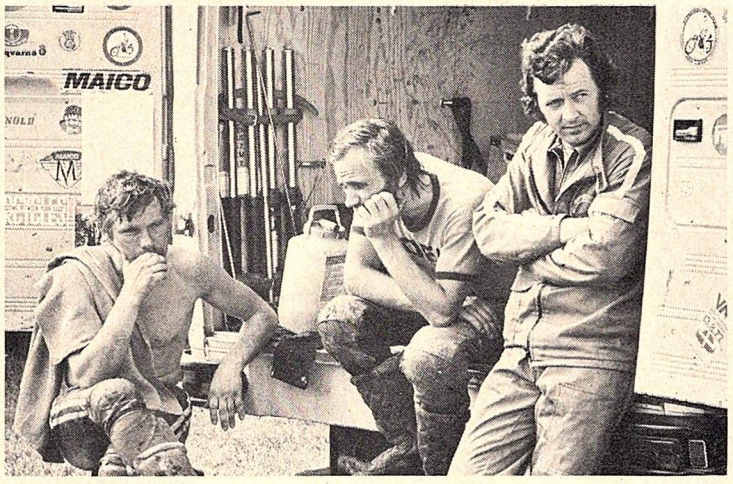
Leaning over the snow fence at a motocross Grand Prix it's impossible to see the riders as anything more than scores of masked madmen tearing around the track fighting with each



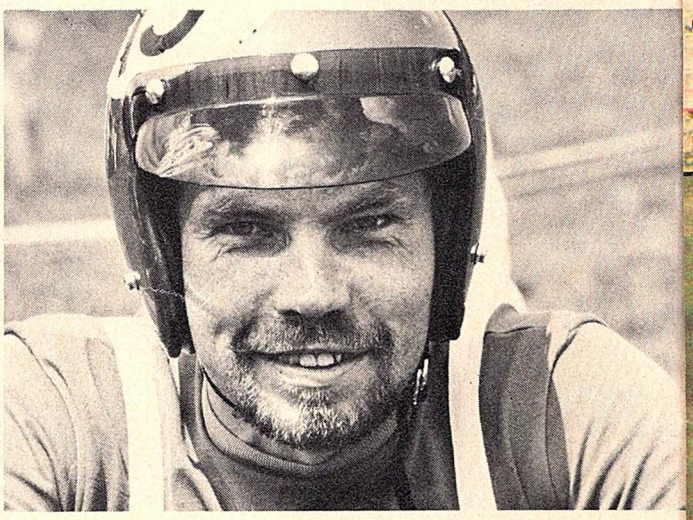
Lanky Jaak Van Velthoven makes his YZ Yamaha look like a Mini-Enduro.

Evan Mower photo

Standing tall. The proud Russian team during the presentation ceremonies at the 1972 Trophee des Nations in Genk, Belgium. Left to right: Team manager Tzofimets Yuzi, Pavel Rulev, Popenko, Alexei Kibirine and Guenady Moisseev.



It's been one of those days for the Husky team. Heikki Mikkola and Bengt Aberg both hit course markers at speed and didn't finish. Competition director Roland Ahreen is looking ahead to next week.



Heikki Mikkola at the 1972 British Grand Prix. You can tell by his smile this was before he hit the post and endoed. Volney Howard photo.

other through flying stones, dust and mud.

Suited up in their goggles and rock guards, the Russians, the Swedes and the Belgians all look alike. Of course, some riders go faster than others and some individuality in riding styles shows up at the track, but not until the noise has died away and the grit and mud has been scraped off do the personalities under the helmets appear.

Even the European superstars are, after all, flesh and blood, and as human beings they are subject to the full range of character traits just like postmen or banking executives.

Roger DeCoster, for example, is a standout away from the track as well as on it.

Roger is more than just World Champion. He's a natural charmer. Roger backs up his good looks and quick winks with continental manners and friendly sincerity that he extends to everyone.

At the victory dinner thrown by Champion Spark Plugs after last year's season, Roger was the one who translated the menu for those of us who couldn't read French. Then he took time to describe the bitter taste of Campari liqueur to one of the Japanese mechanics before we ordered drinks.

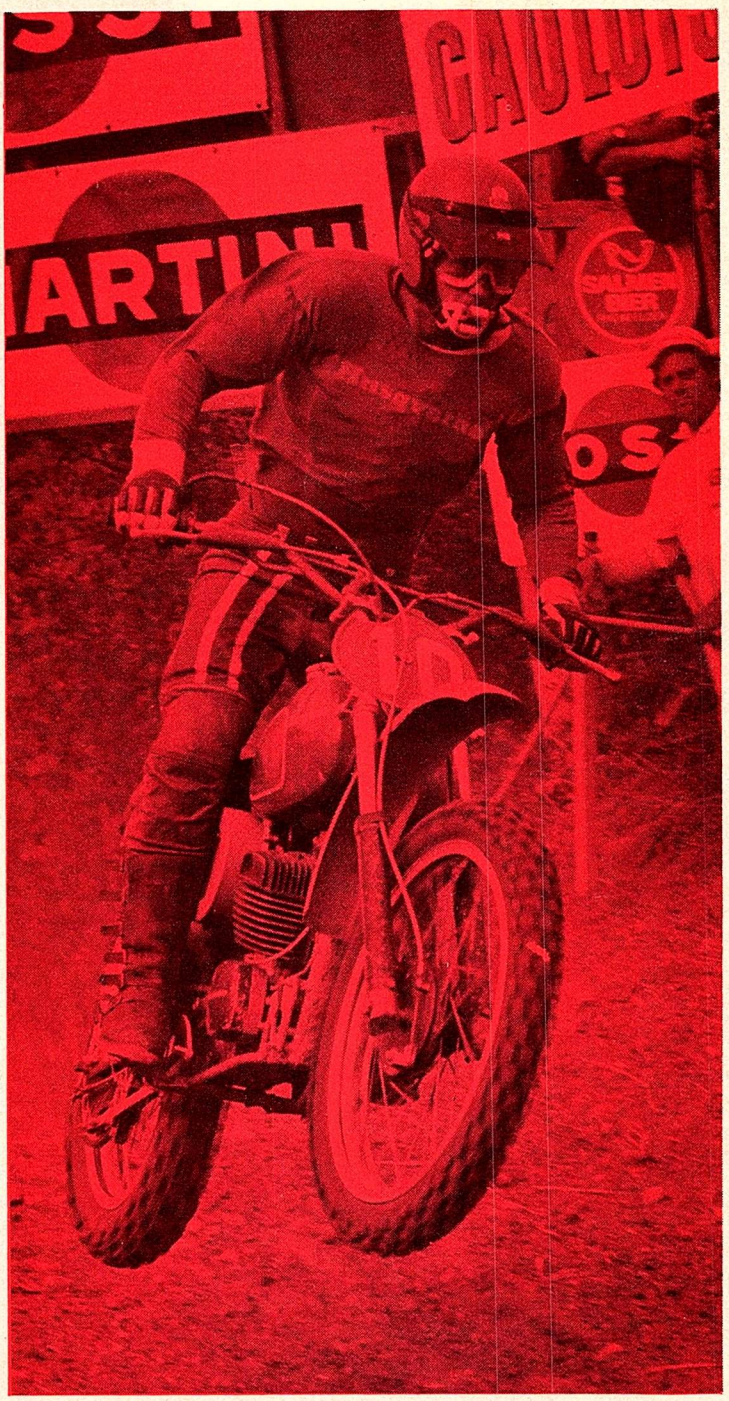
When Mark Blackwell was racing in Europe and needed transportation, Roger found a car for him to buy and then led him through the maze of registration and taxation regulations. This summer, Brad Lackey is staying with Roger and his American girl friend at Roger's home in Tremelo, Belgium.

DeCoster is probably the most "together" racer in motocross today. He has the ability of introspection and he can search his own mind for the reasons behind everything he is doing.

DeCoster speaks several languages and he probably has more friends than

Jaroslav Falta stopped at the side of the course during practice for the Trophee des Nations and immediately had a band of small admirers in knee pants.

Two Japanese mechanics trying to keep their lap chart dry at the rain-soaked Luxembourg Grand Prix.



Boom! Arne Kring crests the hill under the Martini bridge at the 1972 Swiss Grand Prix.

anyone else in the business. Everyone senses that "Roger's just a neat guy."

Interestingly, some of his closest friends are also his closest rivals on the track. Paul Friedrichs, the East German CZ rider, battled back and forth with Roger during the season and finally finished second in the World Championship table. But when Paul and Roger get together at the track on Saturday they'll sit around picking at calluses on their hands and trade stories about how wasted they were following the party after last week's Grand Prix.

In July DeCoster and Ake Jonsson were locked in a dispute stemming from the protest over the results of the British Grand Prix. At the heat of the argument Roger was excitedly explaining his side of the story in French, German and English. Although the controversy went on for more than an hour after the race, no one even raised his voice. A few weeks later Roger and Ake were sitting together, joking and comparing wear patterns on the soles of their motocross boots.

This spirit of gentlemanly rivalry prevails throughout the Grand Prix chase, but that's not to say that it doesn't break down once in a while.

At the mud-mired Spanish Grand Prix in 1972 Joel Robert won the first heat, but Gaston Rahier, a fellow Belgian, got the hole shot in the second heat and led most of the first lap. Joel was pressing Gaston very closely and when the leader hit a haybale and crashed, Joel smacked into his rear tire and did a classic "flying W" over the handlebars.

Joel jumped to his feet in a blind rage and chased poor Gaston through the ropes and into the crowd, where he drew back and popped him in the mouth. The flagman stepped in to stop the melee and everyone cooled off a little in the pouring rain.

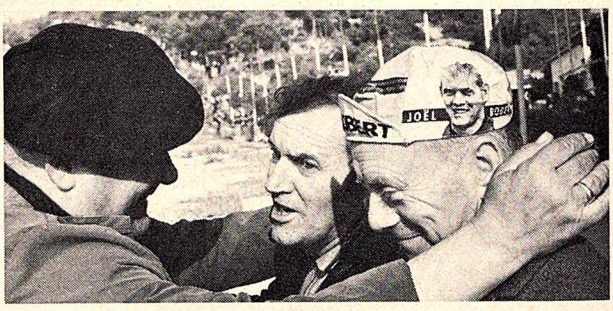
Joel's arm was hurt, so Gaston started

The raucus Finn, Heikki Mikkola, may be the rider to finally blitz DeCoster's 500 World title.

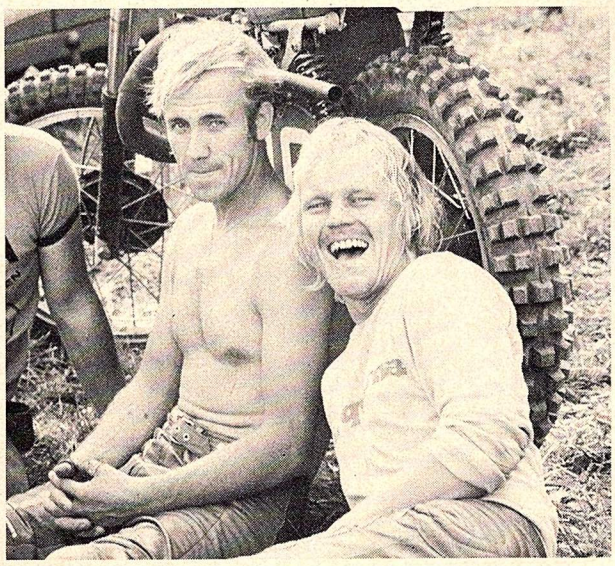
Terry Pratt photo.

Joel Robert has a casual, almost lackadaisical style, but is still the world's best 250 rider.

Evan Mower photo



Some French motocross fans in stylish headgear are talking about wine or women or maybe just old times. Yes, Joel won.



Torlief Hansen is probably laughing at something he said. Or maybe the joke is that Arne Kring just swallowed his snuff.

Ah, sunny Spain. The Czech mechanics at work on the factory CZ machines ridden by the Russians. It rained all night Saturday and the race was held in a foot of mud.

his bike for him so he could ride back to the pits where he packed it in for the day. Then Rahier picked up his own bike and went on to finish third overall.

One week later Gaston and Joel had a good laugh together looking at photographs of the incident.

Robert is a likable guy too. It's just that people first have to learn to tolerate his antics.

In Germany the road out of the pits went up a steep and muddy hill. (Come to think of it, that describes every European pit road I've ever seen.) Most cars inched up the slick hill slowly, usually with someone pushing.

Joel hit the hill with his Ford Capri wide open in first gear with the wheels spinning wildly. He made it up the hill at 10 mph but his tires were going at least 80 and he sprayed the side of Hakan Andersson's van with sticky gumbo. Hakan's wife was in the front seat of the van and before she could roll up the window she got spattered too.

When he got to the top, Joel walked back grinning and handed a scrub brush to the nearest Yamaha mechanic saying, "It looks like you have a little extra work tonight."

Most onlookers were laughing. Hakan Andersson shook his head and said, "Ya, that's yust typical Yoel." Hakan's wife didn't say anything.

The Husqvarna mechanics travel in a big Mercedes truck full of tools, bikes and spares. The mechanics for the 500cc class are two jolly Swedes named Pelé and Eulé. They usually set up a big blue tent in the pits and camp there whenever it is practical. The tent was provided by the Jofa company and it has JOFA in big letters printed on the sides. So if you ask Pelé or Eulé where they are staying that week they'll tell you *Hotel Yofa.*

Hotel Jofa is a good place to come bumming a cup of coffee in the morning, or to get almost any kind of information on race day, and it's usually a good place to get a party started at night.

Two-time World Champion Bengt Aberg is the top gun for Husky in the 500cc class, but you couldn't meet a person who would seem less likely to have the competitive drive of a motocross star. Bengt is an easygoing guy and adversity just seems to roll off his back like water off a duck.

Aberg is teamed with Arne Kring for the 1973 season and they seem to be cut from the same mold. Bengt and Arne are old home town buddies and the Husky management was reluctant to have them race in the same class, since they probably wouldn't be competitive against each other. But Kring and Heikki Mikkola have changed places this year and so the rough and tumble Finn takes his place in the 250cc effort.

Mikkola is just about the only guy wearing a beard in G.P. racing, and he looks like he's been in a few bar fights, but he really is a nice enough guy. Heikki won two Grands Prix last year but he needs to settle down a little before he can put together a championship season. In England he rode WFO for 10 laps and worked up to third place before he hit a post and went end over end like a pinwheel.

The Husqvarna 250cc team is graced by the world's funniest mechanic. His name is Lars, but everyone calls him Emile.

After the Spanish Grand Prix in Barcelona last year he kept us doubled over with laughter until 4 ayem by telling the taxi driver funny stories in Swedish and yelling *Voll Gaz* and *Rapido* every time we ran a red light. There's more to that story, but the details are fuzzy in my mind.

A few months later we were all to-

Cont'd. on page 69

HOW TO BE A HAPPY SPECTATOR

By Toledo Hanson

If you're lookin' but not seein', here's whatcha do

Be seen eating fun foods.

Photo by RICHARD CREED

Here's how the deal works: The racers want to put on a good show and maybe win some money; the spectators want to watch a good show so they spend some money. Yes, motocross racers and their fans have a symbiotic relationship—neither can survive without the other—so being a good spectator is just as important as being a good racer.

In other words, if you aren't spectating to get full enjoyment out of motocross, you will stop going to races, then racers will stop going to races, and then there will be no races.

It's not enough to just show up and listen to the public address system. You have to get involved, get with the beat, get hep to the jive, daddy-o. Motocross races are prime social events, gatherings of many tribes, each tribe capable of making a great deal of racket, both aural and visual. Motocross races become throngs of Great Unwashed Masses struggling towards a single goal; a veritable melting pot of all manner of folk, all toiling away a single splendorous Sunday afternoon with but one purpose: Get the last moto flagged off before the sun goes down, and pack as many jollies as possible into the allotted time.

Now that you know what you've been missing (when all the time you thought you were just watching a bunch of motorcycles go around and around), no doubt you would like to get a few professional hints on motowatching. No doubt.

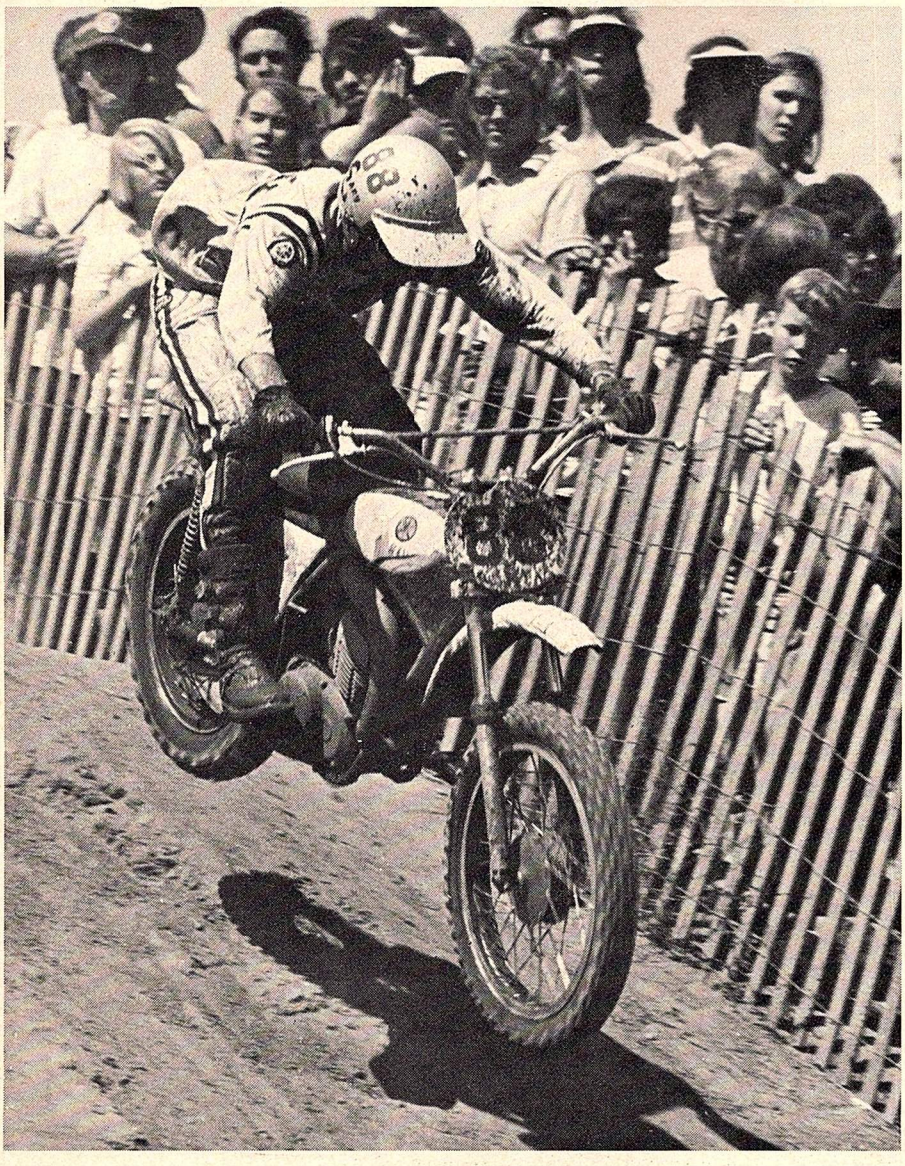
GETTING THERE IS NONE OF THE FUN

There are two schools of thought concerning race-arrival techniques.

The first is the total-empathy bit, watching the race from its early morning foundations to the final scoring. You must rise from bed before the sun, enter you car (pre-packed with bags of potato chips and a styrofoam cooler) and drive to the race while hunched over the wheel blowing warmth into your fist. You get to wait in a line of motorcycle-filled vans at the gate.

Once inside, saunter around the pits, diddle with clutch levers and make suggestions for adjustment, help mechanics appraise plug readings, walk part of the track and comment on how much traction there is now (but it will get dusty as the sun comes out), and point out the best line around the carousel sweeper. In short, do everything but race.

The second school of thought is the minimum-exposure technique. Wake up late with a hangover, spend some time walking around rubbing your eyes, and start thinking up stories concerning the night before to entertain your buddies on the way to the track. When your buddies honk, sprint outside with your T-shirt in your back pocket, shoes in hand. More time is wasted as an open



Take photos of your favorite stars in action.

liquor store is sought, and the gas tank is filled with various pocket-change donations. Go back to Fred's house because he forgot his wallet and finally arrive at the track as the second moto is being flagged off.

BUYING IT

Track admission is accomplished using the same methods Roman Emperor Gludius Maximus used when he promoted peoplefights: cold cash. No Master Charge, Diner's Club, American Express, checks, or IOU's are accepted at any track we know of.

But there are alternatives; in fact, you can *make* money while watching motocross races. Get in tight with the promoter and volunteer to flag a corner. You'll get paid maybe even five bucks a day, which you can add to the money you didn't pay to enter. $! But if you flag, pay attention to your duties, por favor.

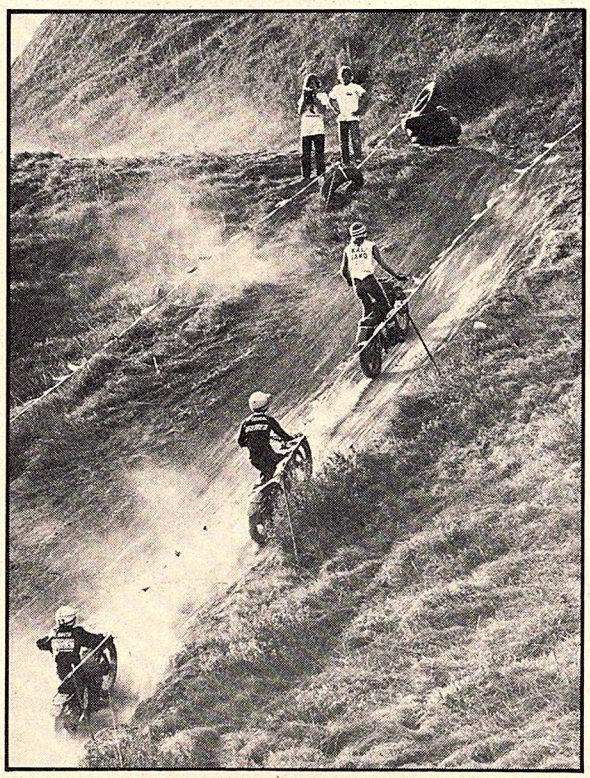
Another clever, moneymaking way to watch the races gratis is to cover the event for one of the weeklies. If you're sharp enough, you can talk the race promoter into letting you do his public relations, you send stories and pictures to the papers, he pays you if they're printed. Write one story, get paid by two people. This happens more than you might think, and everybody benefits. Especially you.

Half the populous might be able to gain free entry with the right words and the proper choice of clothing. Jersey halter tops and cut-off Levi's are perhaps the most effective.

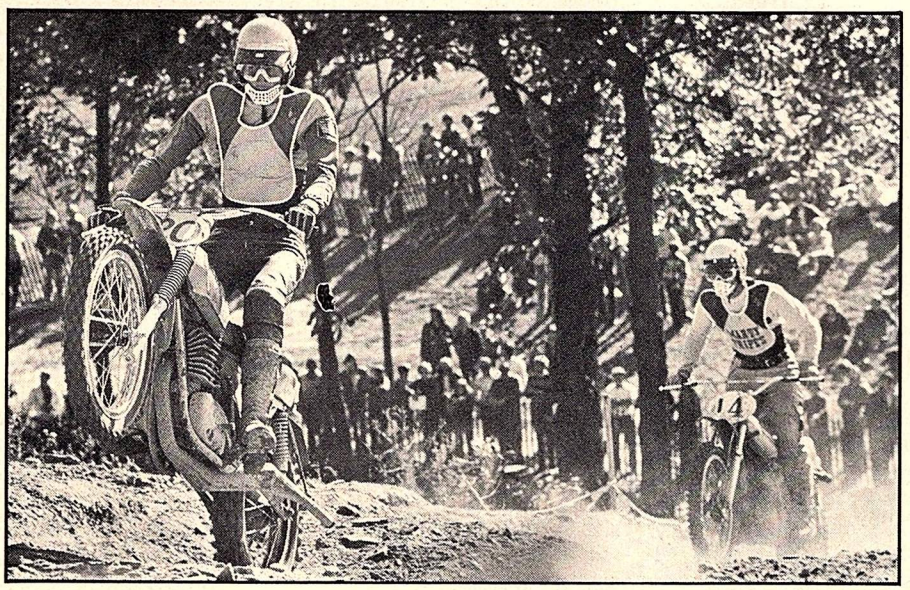
THE PITS

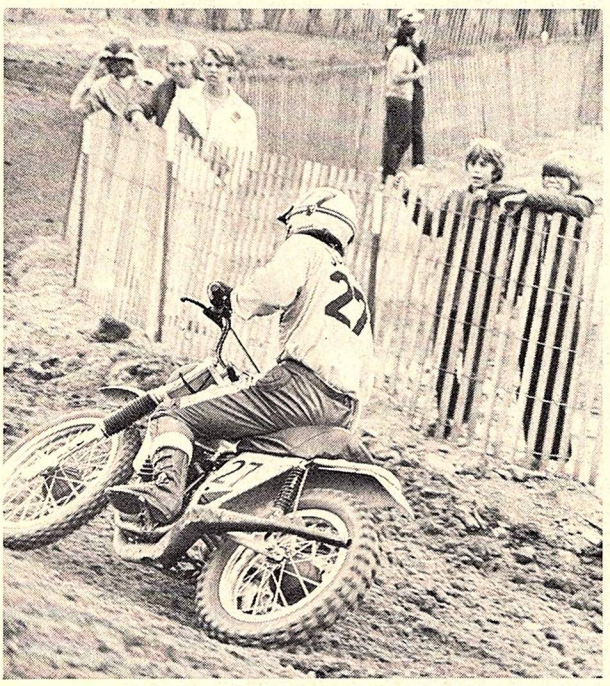
Don't confine yourself to the snow fences. Get in the pits and listen to the tape players boom Led Zeppelin from custom vans, watch expert racers do funny things on mini bikes, give all-alone riders a third hand. Get some helmets-off photos of your favorite riders.

If you want to talk to a rider you've never met, don't approach with an inane remark he's heard a billion times ("Hey, that was a good ride.") or something he'd rather not think about ("Too bad you crashed when you were in the lead."). Instead, lay on him some words that he can expound or reflect upon. Examples: "Doesn't that downhill scare you to death?" "Was Berferd hogging your line on the last lap?" Note that these two questions present a chance for him to talk about something he won't mind talking about, and that these words indicate you were watching

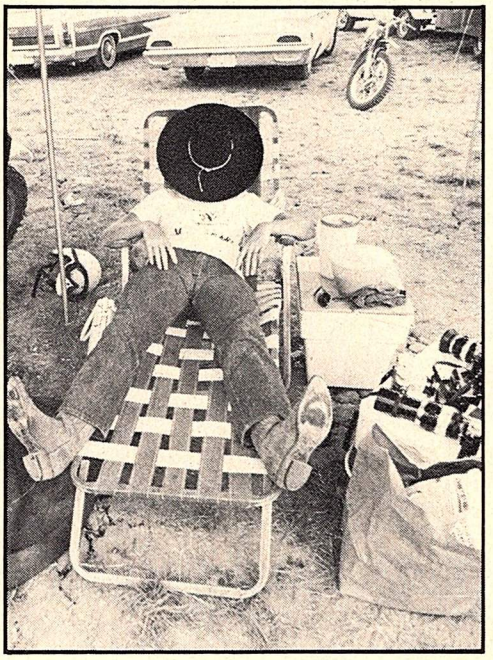


Hard-to-get-at locations offer prime viewing spots at times.





Crowds are thinner during practice, so you can get closer to your favorite stars.



him closely. Most flattering. At this point your rider might ask you to point out lines other riders are taking, or want your honest opinion on how he might go faster. See? You've become part of the race.

Still, remember that riders are just normal people and are often shy—don't mistake this for snobbishness. But if he wants to be left alone, grant him the right. Go ask Berferd about the downhill.

Big-time professional races have closed pits, not so much for the riders but for the mechanics. If the machines aren't perfect, they're out of a job. A friend of mine snuck into the pits at the Saddleback Trans-AMA to talk to some mechanics and came back with the biggest smile I've ever seen. The smile turned out to be a 19mm box end wrench. Don't bother the pros until afterward.

WATCH IT, BUDDY

There are more levels of involvement in a motocross than there are pop-tops scattered around the infield. First-timers can spend all day ogling the array of cross-ups, front-wheel landings, and long-distance shots, all off a single jump.

More experienced spectators can recognize riders from afar, know whose enemy is whose, and can watch battles develop three laps before an untrained observer would.

Spectators who race themselves (usually identified by a quantity of plaster of Paris concentrated to a certain limb) get off watching block passing and other subtle maneuvers, making mental notes comparing the good-handling machines against the bozo bikes, and listening to high-revving motors become a solid piece at the ends of straightaways.

Whatever your skill of spectating, never allow yourself to get lazy and become bored, not when you can—

—stand next to a jump and feel the ground shake.

—watch the good old boys get drunk.

—follow that girl wearing a jersey halter top and cut-off Levi's around the course several times.

—stand by the mudhole and get covered.

—stand under the water truck and get uncovered.

—be seen eating strange foods.

—discover that the girl wearing the jersey halter top and cut-off Levi's has a boyfriend entered in the race.

—go around marveling at all the outlandish T-shirts.

—stand next to the track and advise riders of their positions with finger signals. (If a guy's in first, be careful how you signal him.)

—watch how far a berm shot artist can throw a clump of dirt.

—wonder what AMA officials say to

each other over their funny headsets.

—place bets.

—ask the girl in the jersey halter et cetera to spray insect repellant on your back.

—single out an obscure rider and watch his progression (or lack of) for several laps.

—get a bunch of friends to start screaming and cheering hysterically for one rider—maybe the same obscure one as before. Be nice, now.

—lay down and try to get some sleep.

SHOOT

A camera can get you in if, as I mentioned before, you are covering the race for a weekly. Selling photos to riders can be a gold mine, too.

Use your camera to your spectating advantage. Imagine this spot on the track where riders hit a jump off the end of a straightaway and have to brake hard for a 90-degree turn. Spectators are five-deep, going "oooooh" and "aaaaah," so you know it must look neat. With an expensive looking camera and the right demeanor, you can have the crowd part like the Red Sea to accommodate you. You needn't tell anyone you are important. Just look important. As soon as one person in the crowd senses you, he'll move, at which point everyone moves. Crowds are like that.

GET BACK

Fer chrissakes, don't get hit. Wherever you stand, try to imagine where a bike would go if it chose not to stay on the track at that point. Then don't stand there.

When crossing the track, ever notice how you tend to look both ways? That's silly. The bikes only go one way. You know what's going to happen the first time you don't look both ways, don't you? You're going to get hit by a furniture van. Play it safe and look both ways.

If someone is coming and you want to cross, don't. Never cross unless you have enough time to walk safely. Then run. That way, you haven't done the rider disservice by breaking his concentration. And don't forget the target fixation phenomenon: Whatever a motorcycle rider looks at, he hits. Sadly, some motorcycle riders, particularly novices, uncontrollably stare at things they *don't* want to hit, and. . . .

If a rider goes down, pause for a moment before helping him unless there's immediate danger. It's a matter of pride; motocrossers can take the hoariest looking spills and get hurt no more than if they had fallen out of bed. Whatever happens, your first responsibility is to make sure traffic is duly warned.

If perchance the fallen rider is hurt, remember all your First Aid from health class. Move him as little as possible. Remove his helmet and possible breathing obstructions gently. If someone appears who knows more than you, step back. Too many Good Samaritans will oftimes compete for glory at the expense of the injured. At times like this, all you can do is keep gawkers back and clear things for the ambulance.

SAY WHAT?

Few sounds can match the effectiveness of the subtle pulsations of an expansion chamber when it comes to potential deafness. Ringing ears are nature's way of telling you permanent damage is setting in. Fortunately, most racetracks require silencers and most racetracks comply gratefully. But silencers still aren't silent. Ear plugs will make your Sundays at least 10 decibels better.

GAG!

Hotdoggeries and other concession stands are common at motocross tracks. Prices range from steep on up; quality of the food and service is inversely proportional to the amount of money you spend. If your concessionaire is selling ptomaine with relish, a simple boycott is in order.

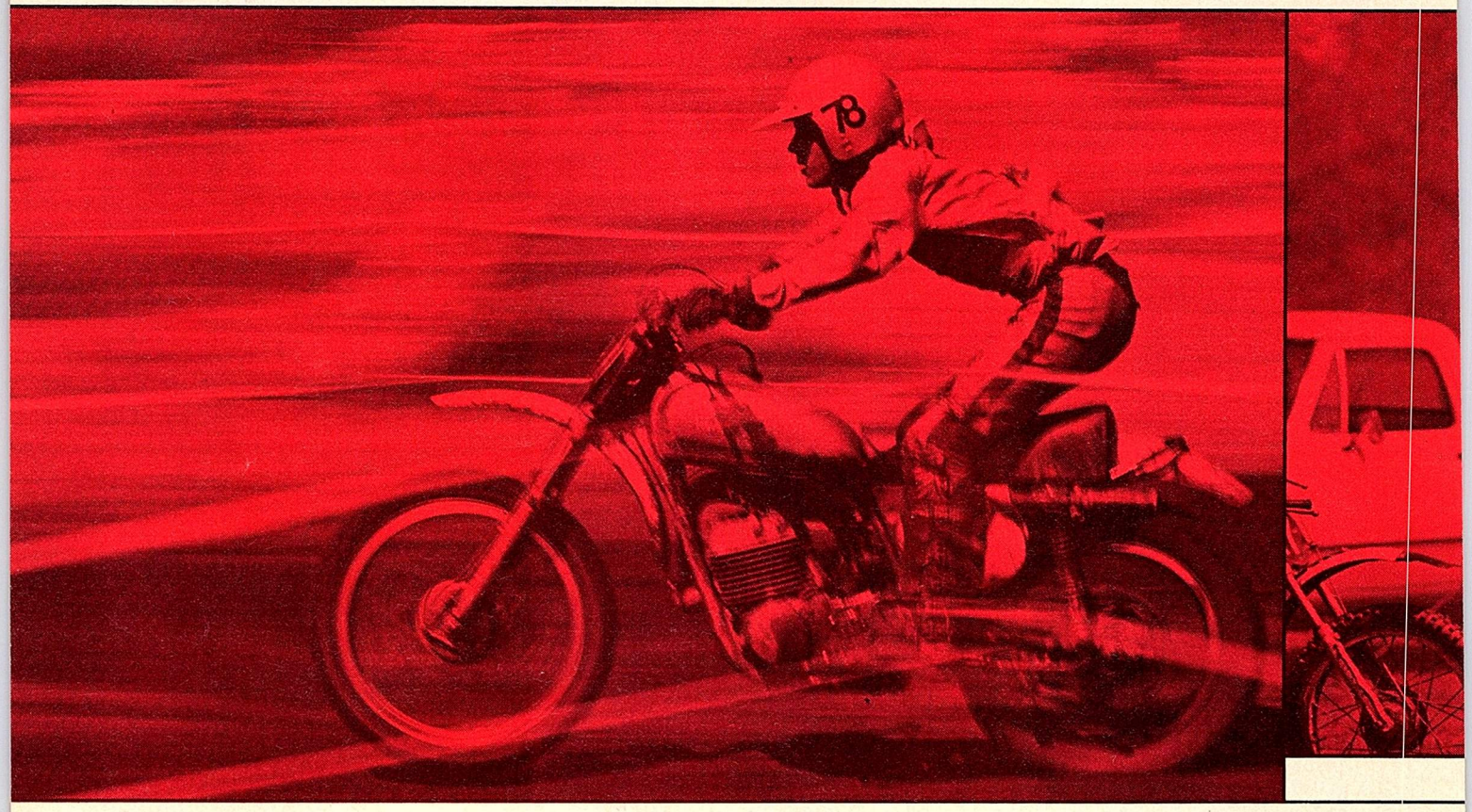
Personally, I prefer to take a small jar of chia seeds to munch on, a couple of pieces of fruit, and maybe buy a soft drink if I can't mooch some water somewhere. Chugging my dainty bod up and down hills all day takes a bundle of energy, so I honor the good exercise with a light, healthy diet. Snacking on fried chicken and sipping hooch all day would be much more fun, though.

Motocross races can be more fun than a sock-sorting contest, spelling bee, and Tupperware Party, all rolled into one. Show up wearing red, white and blue overalls, a Grateful Dead T-shirt, and bring along five chums and lady-friends, all bent on helping your cousin Bill win *at any cost,* and it's not bad. Not bad at all. ●

19,000 empty beer cans can't be wrong

HANGTOWN

By Pete Szilagyi



There are two annual classic non-AMA pro motocrosses in Northern California: Hangtown and Mammoth Mountain. Once you go to your first Mammoth or Hangtown, you'll understand why the area has a corner on the market.

***

Northern California is a liberated back-East. Sophisticated, but not so sophisticated that it interferes with the residents' fun. And with a liberal dose of regional chauvinism:

Their mountains are the tallest in the State.

Their City, San Francisco, is the most cosmopolitan of them all.

Their heritage is gold, the '49ers, and wagon trains stranded in Donner Pass.

Berkeley, their University, is an innovator and a newsmaker.

And Carmel-by-the-Sea makes some of the southern beaches look like Coney Island in December.

They also have Brad Lackey, Bill and Bob Grossi, Ron Bass, Carl Cranke and Ron Huffman.

Simply by living where they do, Northern Californians have nothing to prove, so they can devote their efforts to enjoying life. You could go to an earthquake in Northern California and have a good time. Guaranteed.

***

The original Dirt Diggers Motorcycle Club in Southern California has a big race each November that they call Hopetown. It's not only a race, it's a social event. When the Diggers started a chapter up north, the new guys figured they should have a classic, too. So they invented Hangtown, named after legends begun at nearby Placerville where, presumably, all the bad guys were taken care of that way. Hopetown, Hangtown; get it?

DD North followed the example set by DD South and ran the Amateurs on Saturday and the Pros on Sunday. The first four Hangtowns were good fun; everyone came to see Brad win the open class and rarely were they disappointed. Each year the event got bigger, until 1973 when 19,000 spectators and the pros came. Hangtown had turned into a happening, and Northern California loves every minute of it.

***

A couple of weeks before Hangtown '73, the track was a swamp. Unusually heavy spring rains didn't soak into the sand, mostly because the water from unusually heavy autumn rains and unusually heavy winter rains was still there. The Diggers located some earth-moving equipment and drained the water in half the time it would have taken the Army Corp of Engineers to put the requisitions through.

***

The night before the big Hangtown Pro motocross, Yamaha's dovetail truck

stayed at a motel in Shingle Springs, California. Strapped and sealed inside were Tim Hart and Pierre Karsmakers' YZ Yamahas. Tim and Pierre were somewhere above, flying the 400 miles from Yamaha's Los Angeles headquarters to Hangtown. For all the people in the plane knew, Tim and Pierre could have been securities salesmen, or orthodontists on their way to Sacramento to fix Ron Reagan's teeth. Instead, they were pursuing their newfound professions of being gentlemen racers. No tools, no funky chili dogs at the A&W, no stopping in a Rest Area to check the oil . . . flying the friendly skies of Yamaha. Early the next morning, Hart, Karsmakers, and the Yamaha truck would rendezvous at Hangtown.

The folks at Hangtown aren't accustomed to gentlemen racing. They're satisfied when Brad and his scrufty-looking, fun-loving entourage pull through the gate. Now Brad is also a gentleman racer, with the couth to call from Europe and apologize for not making it.

***

Pick any random vehicle in the pits at Hangtown and more than likely you'll find that the occupants are West Coast versions of Sonny DeFeo. For each bike there is a dog, for each rider there is a girl, and for each van there are four humans, two dogs, and two motorcycles. And they're all having a good time, even the van, who is sniffing around the pits after a lady van. Only at Hangtown.

***

In years past, if there was a $6,000 motocross like Hangtown, no professional racer could afford to miss it. Only a few times a year were purses that large offered, and a good placing would greatly ease the financial burden on a traveling pro. With luck, he might break even for the month. But this year Brad and Jimmy Pomeroy were off stomping the Europeans, and the Kawasaki stay-at-home team of Jim Weinert was following the Texas series. So were Don Jones and his Winnebago full of Hondas and sons.

But every other pro that wasn't in Europe, Texas, or at a qualifier somewhere made it to Hangtown, many on new machinery . . . or new to them, anyway.

DeSoto was on the alloy-tank, trick-frame CZ. Runyard had his new Suzuki and looked squirrelly in practice. He finally learned to ride it in the last moto. Montesa put a 250 Vehkonen Replica under Bill Grossi and jumped for joy when he ran away with the Amateur race on Saturday. By Sunday evening, Grossi was pushing it across the finish line, but until then the other riders called it a jet.

Ron Bass, Jim Cooke and Gene Cannady rode the Kawasaki 450s; Cannady looked tired, Cooke fast, and Ron Bass exceptionally fast, considering the fact that he's used to riding a Maico and the Kawasaki isn't even close to being a Maico. Monark's ace in the hole, Danny Turner, showed up on a 125 Pursang due to a breakdown in communications with his sponsor.

There were more Honda Elsinores at Hangtown than there are in most States.

***

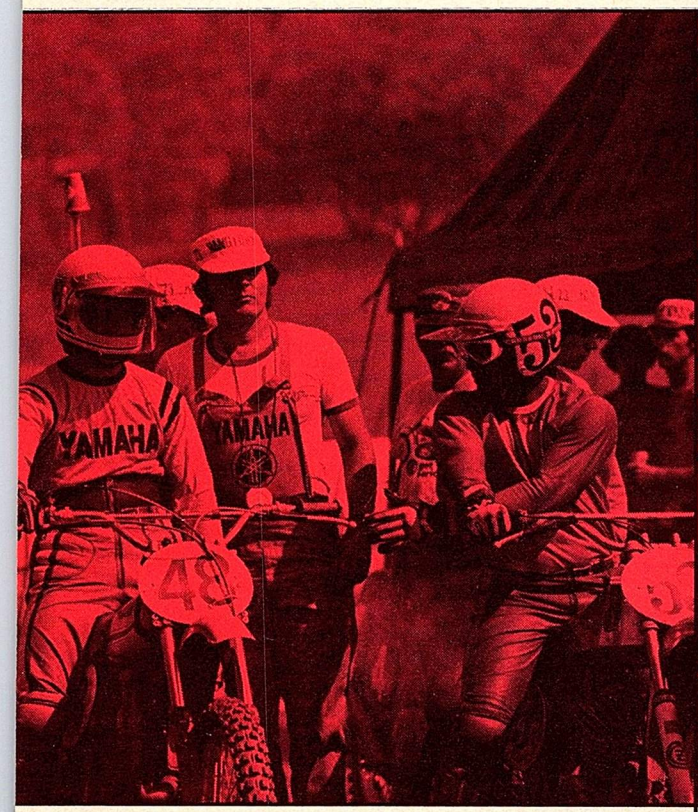
When any group of pro racers show up at a meet, it's great sport to watch them all in practice and try to predict the winners. If you follow the riders, the Open class is the easiest to predict, the 250s not so easy, and the 125s impossible. Still, most everyone called Ray Lopez. Ray was the mythical 125 National Champ, as you read elsewhere in this issue, and after Arroyo he had been picking some watermelon sized cherries at local races.

But the entire Mettco Penton team was there on meticulously prepared bikes. Marty Smith, the dark horse again on his Monark, and the entire Brooks family showed with a truckload of distributor-prepared Deeks.

Northern California's best bet was Carl Cranke, Brad Lackey's former CZ tuner and a man who probably knows more about CZs and Pentons than anyone else outside Czechoslovakia and Austria.

The first moto was Lopez, Smith and Bill Grossi, one of the very few pros who signed up for two classes and actually rode two classes. Two half-hour motos, along with all the qualifiers in each class, is fun in one class, but murder if you ride two.

Marty Smith came from behind to win the second moto and the overall,



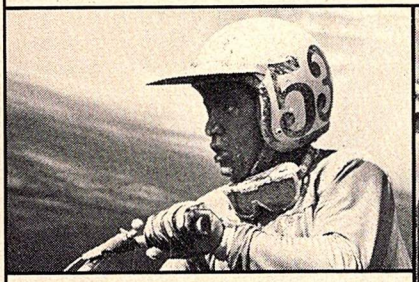
DeSoto extends a good luck handshake to Hart . . .

. . . while Pierre yawns.

A rough way to DNF; you're hurt and the Yamaha is burning in the bushes.

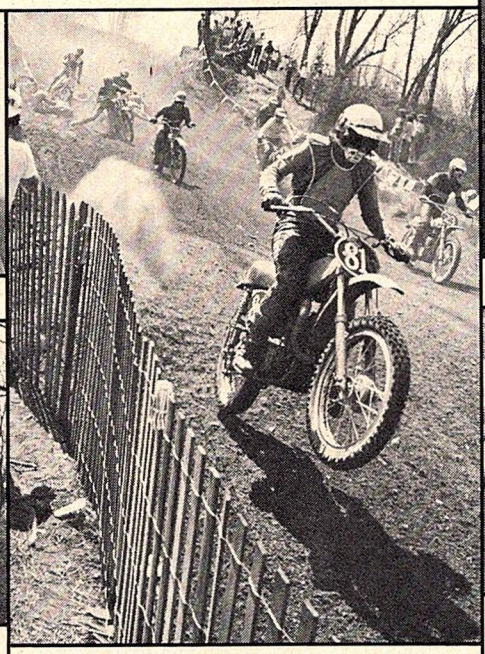
Bruce McDougal found the best line through the mud . . . much to Bob Brooks' dismay.

Ken Zahrt leads the 250 Experts on Saturday, winner Grossi is #53, and tucked in the middle is the first 250 Penton we've seen in competition.

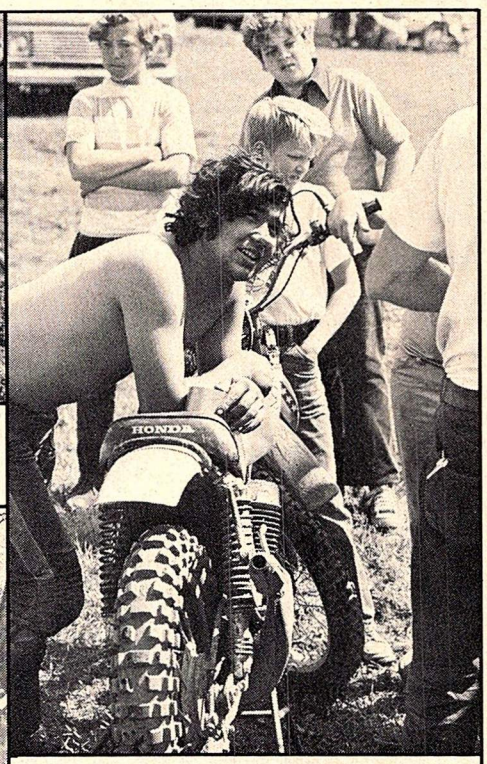


The Pineapple Kid.

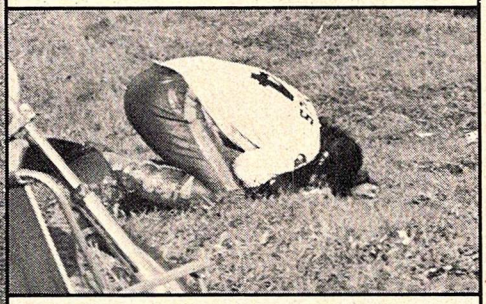
Yamaha's Dynamic Duo, already far ahead on the first lap.



The rear guard of a 250 Pro start. They're still crashing back there.



Tripes before . . .



. . . then tired and disappointed after riding the entire moto with one footpeg and learning he had been penalized in the first moto.

returning happy thoughts to the Swedes from Monark, who didn't know what to expect with only one team rider entered. You have to figure the law of averages in a class where the bikes must be run wide open for an hour and a half. Smith beat the law.

***

Either Marty Tripes or the guy who designed the Penton "Fair Start" starting gate blew it. Marty rode his chi-chis off and crossed the finish line first in both 250 motos, but had to take third place money home. He was alleged to have jumped the gate in the first moto; the allegations voiced by one or two mechanics from opposing factory team(s).

Whether or not Marty jumped intentionally will never be known, but the Penton gate is low and easy to climb, not exactly the Berlin Wall of starting gates. Marty was penalized one lap.

Tripes lost the footpeg off his Elsinore in the second moto and still won it, which is truly amazing for two reasons: Tripes is a stand-up rider, which made the big hole where the peg used to be doubly disconcerting, and he had to fend off Tom Rapp, who was doing his once-a-month get-back-on-the-pipe thing and passing everyone on the track.

Officially it was Rapp in moto one, and Tripes in moto two, with Thorwaldson, Grossi, Jim Wilson (back on CZ), Dave Longcor and Bill Cooke thrashing behind them.

Tripes was seriously disappointed.

***

For anyone who remembers the so-called good old days when Tim Hart and John DeSoto both rode Montesas, then Maicos, Hangtown's Open class had a nostalgic tinge. It was also an ironic, but understandable turn of events. John was always the gentleman racer with the fattest contracts and the "name." Tim just sort of bo-de-oh'ed along on his Maico, usually finishing one step behind DeSoto. But they've always been the best of friends since Montesa.

Now Tim is the gentleman racer, and John is trying to continue being a gentleman racer. And here they were back at a good old California money motocross, playing around in practice, waiting for each other to come around, and play racing, and slapping hands, and making sure they lined up at the gate together.

John finished third overall, two steps behind Tim, who was ten steps behind Karsmakers. Bill Payne, who could easily be mistaken for Hart in his old Maico days—striped, full-coverage helmet and all—almost had Desoto aced, but the Maico's chamber self-destructed and rider after rider picked him off in the second moto. Even Mike Runyard, who was making his Suzuki go incredibly fast by then.

***

Pierre hopped back on the plane, $600 richer. 19,000 others picked up the sleeping bags, dogs, girl friends, and bikes, and floated home.

***

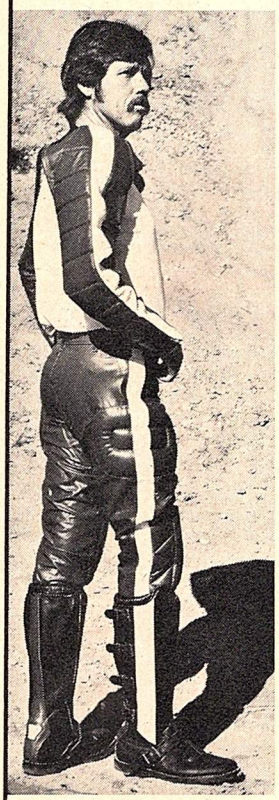
Hangtown may be the best. ●

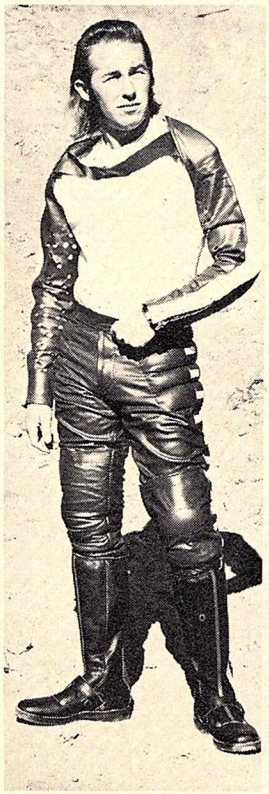
really . . .

satisfaction guaranteed

or

your MONEY back!





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STROKE

Cont'd. from page 6

Since hand lawn mowers' blades turn with the wheels, your newly modified mower won't cut too well. When you push it across the lawn, it will leave two big ruts, where the bound-up wheels dug through the turf. Don't let this bother you, just mow as usual. The added effort of pushing a seized-up mower will strengthen your leg and arm muscles. An added benefit is that, after a few months of mowing, your lawn will be ruined from all the wheel ruts. By the time the lawn expires, you will be in great shape and won't have to exercise any longer. Nor will you have to mow the lawn. Thank me.

6. "Common Cents" (ha-ha). This exercise is so simple that it's a wonder that someone hasn't thought of it before. I guess I'm just an innovator. When you get paid on Friday, go to the bank and convert your entire paycheck to pennies (centavos if you live in Mexico). Carry the entire amount with you at all times. After a few days, your entire body will feel strong and healthy from carrying all that extra weight around.

CC also has a side benefit. It provides incentive for your jogging program. How? Try to buy that new Trelleborg with 3,000 pennies. Your dealer will run you out. It's good exercise running from a 52-tooth rear sprocket thrown like a frisbee.

7. "Brahms Bombs." BB takes the best of Highway Patrol (auto), and Girling Slam (springs) to provide a superior wrist conditioning exercise.

Set your car radio on the worst classical music station on the dial. That shouldn't be too hard. Next, disassemble the radio and install a spring around the tuning knob (a CZ kickstarter return spring will do). Reassemble and go for a drive. Turn on the radio, ugh . . . classical music, switch to a rock station. But the dial immediately returns to the classical music. How long can you stand it? The more you hate classical music, the stronger you'll get.

We're not prejudiced against those of you who like classical music, so quit sniveling, just install the spring to keep the tuner on a rock station. You should have figured that out by now.

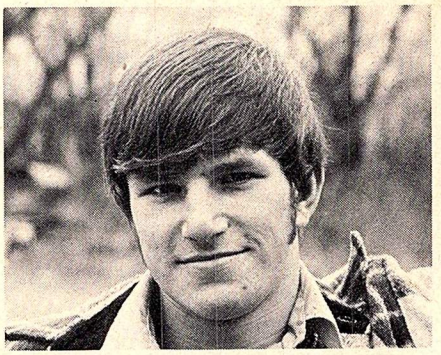
Uh oh, that's all for now folks. I just saw my auto insurance man pull up out front . . . and he's got a cop with him . . . a Highway Patrolman . . . and they're checking out the flat spots I've worn in my tires from Highway Patrolling . . . and the lady next door is complaining about my lawn . . . and the cop is shuffling through my pile of torn up phone books . . . and they're talking about busting rocks with a hammer and what good exercise it is. How do you bribe a cop with 14,237 pennies? ●

By Paul Boudreau with a little help from Ernie Cassidy

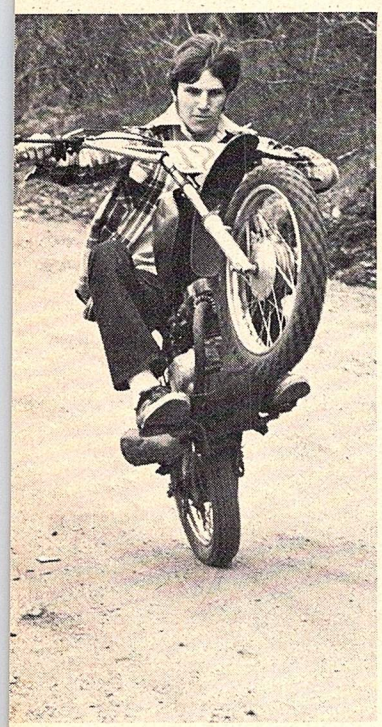
Best back-East MXer since Weinert?

New Shoe

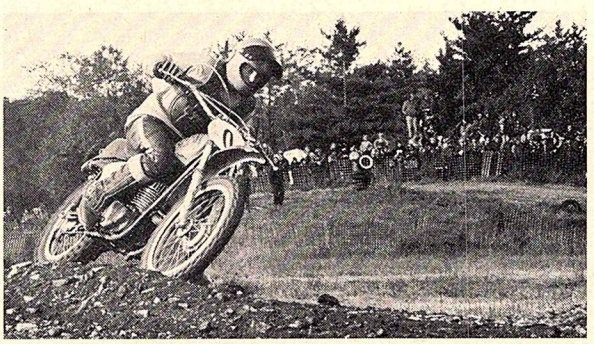
NEW ENGLAND'S JIMMY ELLIS



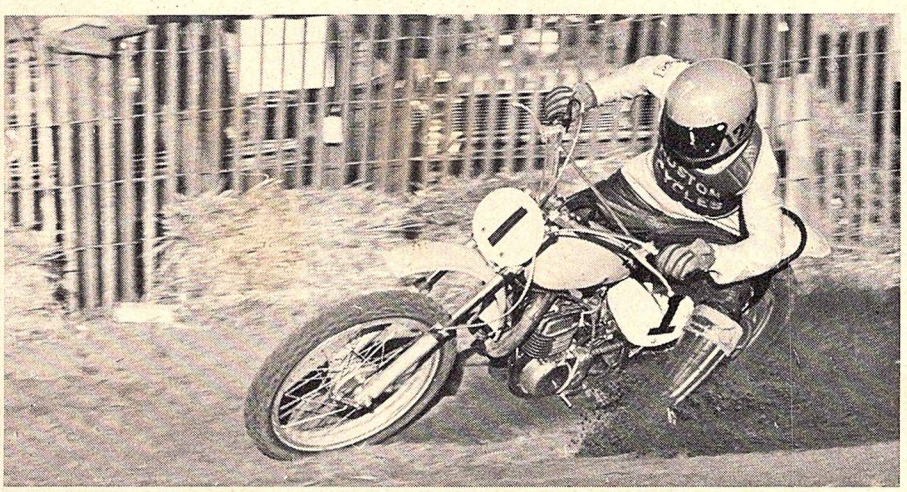
Look at the neck on that kid! To keep in shape, Jimmy uproots trees near his home in Colbalt, Conn.



At home, Jimmy likes to keep his parents stimulated by playing with his mini Honda.



Out front and all alone, Jimmy kisses the top of one of Pepperell's shrapnel berms. He races for himself.



Half-milin' a soft left-hander. That's what we call one-zero-zero-percent TRACTION!

Jimmy Ellis has the situation well under control. In 1969 he won the New England 100cc scrambles championship at the tender age of 13. The next year he won the 125 championship, and the following year both the 125 and 250 classes. Last year he copped the 250 and Open class championships to bring his four-year, 157-race record to 110 wins, 23 seconds, 14 thirds, one fourth and nine DNF's. Next year, if he's still around, they're going to bronze his boots.

When he rides, he generates excitement, not with flashy riding but with flat-out berm-bustin' speed. Even though he can wrap up a race with a half-lap lead in a few minutes, the spectators will still lean on the snow fencing every time he comes around because the kid is going as fast as he can and that's a show.

The factors that go into making a "racer's racer," as we would call Jimmy, are many. He has the body and stamina to go 45 minutes at Unadilla which could place him well in Europe. His cajones factor, a rating of the ability of his right hand to say yes when his head says no, is quite high. But the thing that puts snap into his performance and money in his pocket is the goal not simply to beat the other riders, but to extract the maximum from himself and his machine every minute of the race. And to please his mom.

A few years ago, at an insignificant race near Cape Cod, Massachusetts, we watched Jimmy's mother standing by the fence with a stopwatch and clipboard while Jimmy was demolishing the 125 Expert class. By the third time around he was lapping the slower riders with nobody in sight behind him. She just kept checking her stopwatch and marking her clipboard and screaming and waving her arms every time Jimmy shifted gears. This went on for the whole moto which Jimmy easily won. With moral support like that, the kid could have been a successful Christian in ancient Rome.

In many cases the rider who has no competition and always wins will not improve. In Jimmy's case, he has the

best competition in the world: himself. Most of his racing is done up front where he carries on a fierce battle with his survival instincts. The result is a fast, fearless race that usually ends up with Jim in the winner's circle. When he does find outside competition, it's against some heavy-duty talent.

New England may not be the center of razzle-dazzle motocross in this country, but it is a way station for many of the nation's premier racers. Jimmy Weinert and Barry Higgins were developing there while Bruce McGuire was losing weight. Peter Lamppu spent two years in the area getting his head together for national competition. But none of these big-time stars ever seemed to bother Jimmy Ellis. He just kept on winning races.

A good indication of his insatiable desire to go fast came last year at a race in, of all places, Maine. Ahya, they's havin' a motacycle race down the road a ways.

Canadian National Champion Ron Keyes showed up to do battle and the odds were up in the air as to who could beat who. It was a classic confrontation between the older, more experienced pro and the young speedball. If you watch someone like Ellis long enough, you start to feel he's the fastest thing there is. But Keyes was a National Champion and you don't get that title selling pies.

In the first 30-minute moto (three 30s—they don't mess around back east), Keyes opened a tremendous lead when Ellis lost his brakes and crashed twice in the first ten minutes. Fifteen minutes later, Jimmy caught and passed Keyes after working his way from 20th place. Then he just walked away from the Canadian like he does to the local boys every week, still without a rear brake. After the moto, Jimmy was in the pits wrestling with his tootsie while Keyes sat collapsed in a lawn chair. As it turned out, Keyes won the meeting after Jimmy's Yamaha blew up in the last moto, but young Ellis had proved his point.

This year Jimmy traveled to Florida to race the Fort Pierce Winter-Am. With a brand-new 450 Kawasaki he took a tenth in the Open Pro class just behind Rich Thorwaldson, and Thor had a good day. The rest of the first ten finishers were from California except for one guy from Holland. A tenth in this race for a 17-year-old kid from Colbalt, Connecticut, is shooting down some mighty big ducks.

Yamaha International knows all about him. He's proved he can cut it against the pros and he can't go any higher in New England. This year again, Boston Cycle is sponsoring his Yamahas, machines he and his tuner/father know well. He's got the desire, the ability, the body and a Winnebago. We think it's time for Jim to go racing.

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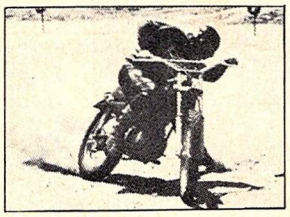

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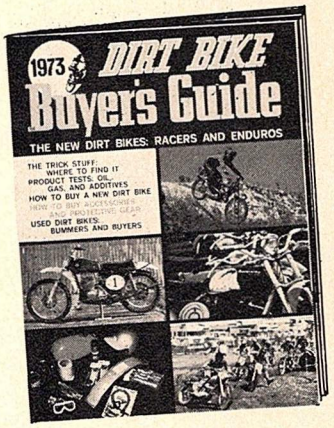
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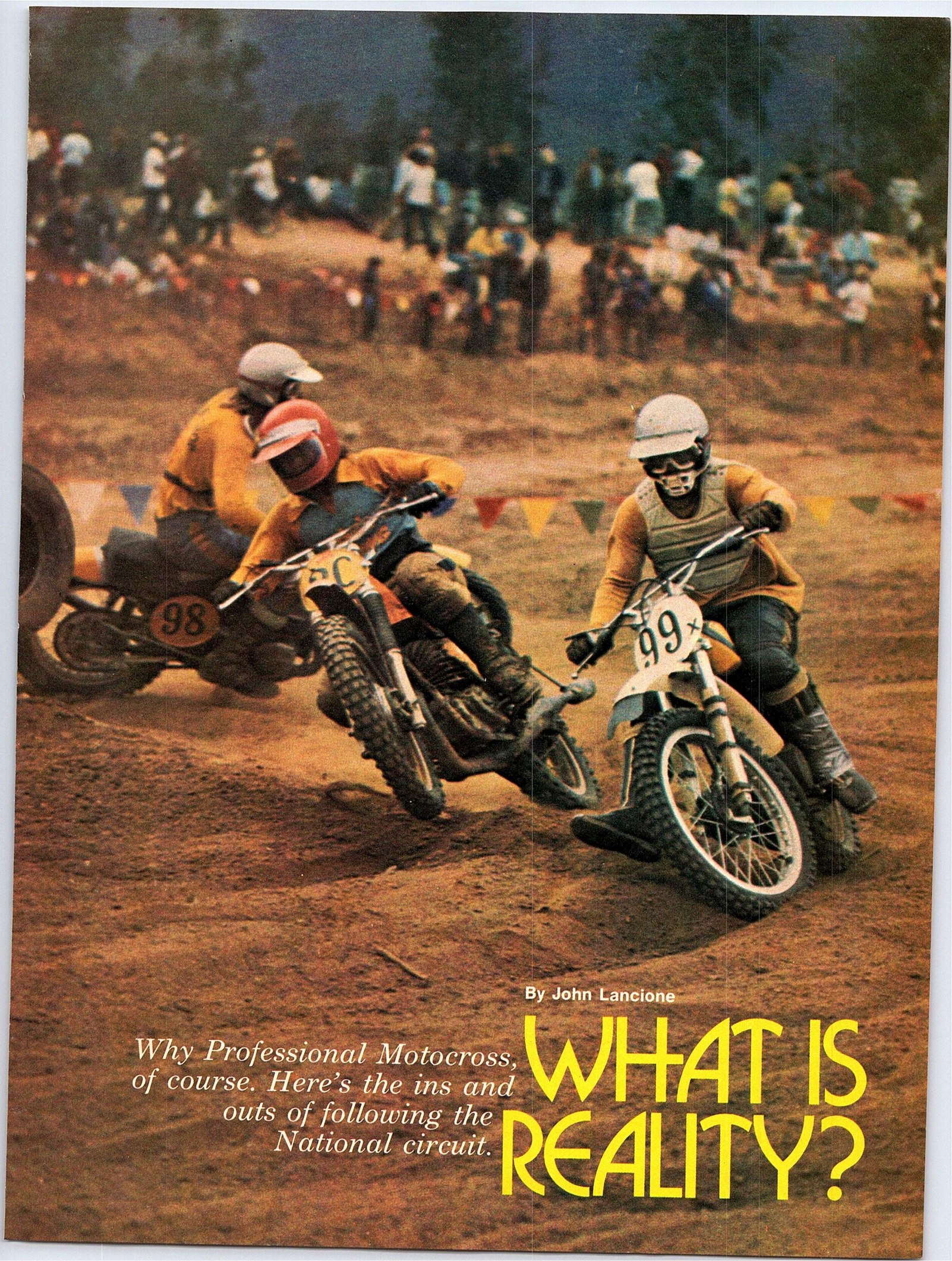


By John Lancione

Why Professional Motocross, of course. Here's the ins and outs of following the National circuit.

WHAT IS REALITY?

Professional motocross can be confusing. At the track all you have to do is stand there and marvel at the bikes going around, but the problem is figuring out what kind of motocross it is that you're watching, and how its outcome will affect the determination of the 250 and 500 AMA champions.

"Hey Harvey, there's a pro MX at Cowflop Raceways tomorrow, let's go."

"What kind is it?"

"Mmmm, I think it's a National Trans-AMA Qualifying Grand Prix, or maybe a Professional Amateur International Qualifying Series . . ."

"Oh, er yeah."

Part of the fun of watching professional motocross is keeping up with the various points races, so you have a better perspective on the whole scene and know that they're not just racing for a purse. Often, you'll go to a pro race and watch some guy crash 14 times in each moto, but still get up and continue. You might think he's out of the money and crazy for even trying, but that rider might be racing for points and even a sixteenth place is worth something.

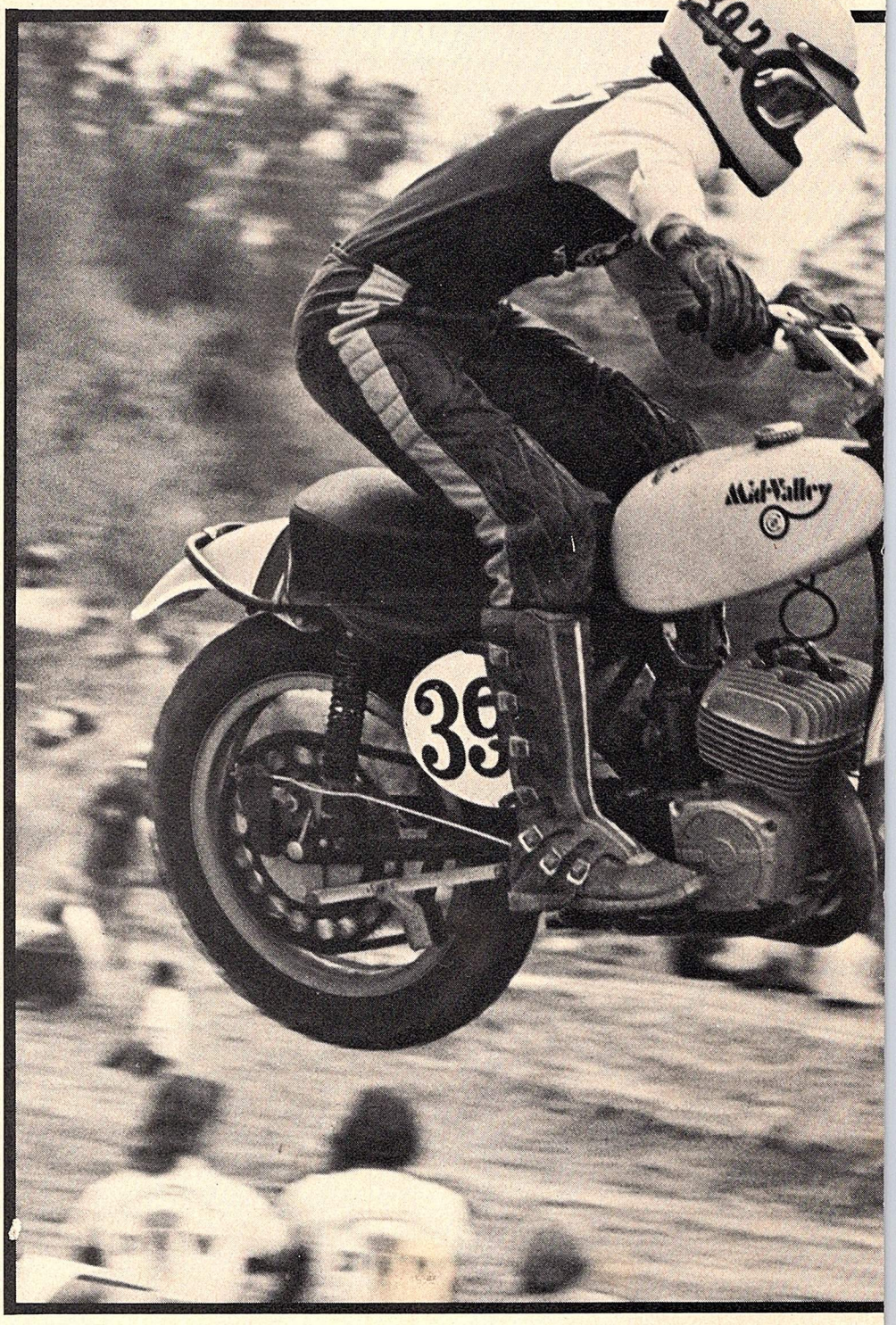
The various types of AMA Pro motocrosses are: Qualifier, National, Inter-AMA, Trans-AMA, and World Grand Prix.

A Qualifying race may be an individual event or part of a series, like the Winter-AMA in Florida and the Tex-AMA in Texas. It's necessary for riders who want to race in the International races to ride in at least one Qualifier. A big problem in International races up until 1971 was that any American who wanted to ride against the Europeans could buy an AMA license and go racing. There were a lot of riders on the track who had no business being there. Qualifying races were initiated to make sure that only the best American riders get to the International races.

Qualifying meets are held all over the country between January and the beginning of June, just before the Inter-AMA series begins.

The overall winner of a class in a Qualifying meet receives 12 points. Second through fifth place finishers are awarded ten points, and sixth through tenth get five points. Three points go to positions 11 through 20, and everyone else gets one point just for showing up.

The AMA also keeps track of how many Qualifiers a racer has ridden. For example, let's say that we're down to the last starting position for one of the Trans-AMA meets and we have to choose between two mythical riders. Rider Ben Stepinoff has ridden 18 Qualifiers and earned 136 points, for an average of 7.55 points per meet. His buddy, Bengt Phork, has only ridden 15 Qualifiers, and has been awarded 124 points. His average points per race is 8.26 so he would get the starting position. Oh well, Ben always got the prettiest girls.



Once a rider builds up a good point average, he shouldn't have to ride any more Qualifiers. Incidentally, the purses for Qualifiers run from $900 to $3,000.

Next we have National Championship Motocross. These races determine the No. 1 National rider for the 250cc and 500cc class. The top 20 overall in each class receive National Championship Points (that's page 33 in your program, folks. Points system #3.) Entries for Nationals close 30 days before the meet.

If you miss the closing you can post enter at the track. However, instead of $10 it costs you $29. All is not lost because $6 out of the $10 and $25 out of the $29 goes directly to the Point Fund for the class you entered. At the end of the year the top 10 riders in each class split the money that has accumulated for their class.

In 1972 the 250cc Point Fund totaled $7,830 with Gary Jones as the No. 1 rider collecting $2,115.78. The 500cc Point Fund totaled $12,323. Brad Lackey's share as No. 1 was $4,189.62. Only riders with American licenses can compete in these meets and you don't have to ride a Qualifier in order to ride a National. Nationals pay at least $5,000 prize money split equally between the 250cc and 500cc class.

There are two International Motocross series in the United States. They are the Summer 250cc Inter-AMA and the 500cc Trans-AMA. The Inter-AMA consists of five AMA-FIM sanctioned motocross meets during June and July. Two classes are run, a 250cc International and a 500cc support. The 250cc class is limited to 40 starting positions with a maximum of 20 positions reserved for foreign riders. The International class also pays National Championship Points to the top 20 American finishers.

All American riders for both the International and support class will be chosen by their performance in the 1973 Qualifying meets. The minimum prize money for an Inter-AMA race is $10,000 with 85 percent to the International class and 15 percent to the support class.

The Trans-AMA is similar to the Inter-AMA except that the International class is for 500cc machines. National Championship Points are awarded to the top 20 American finishers in the 500cc class. Rider selection and starting positions are the same as the Inter-AMA.

In 1973 there will be two International World FIM super big deal motocrosses in this country. An honest-to-gosh points-paying 500 GP will be held at Carlsbad, California, on June 24th, and there will be an FIM 125 Championship at St. Louis, Missouri, on August 5th. I suggest that you make it to either one or both of these races, even if you have to mortgage the CZ and sell the dog to get the cash. Since Championship points will be awarded, none of the top riders in the universe can afford to miss this one. Each country will be allowed a limited number of starting positions, possibly only three or four, so only the very best will compete. A Support class of American riders will also be featured.

MOTOCROSS ACTION, that dazzling new magazine that you have in your hands, will be covering the National and International AMA races, so keep tuned to 100,000 watt MXA. ●

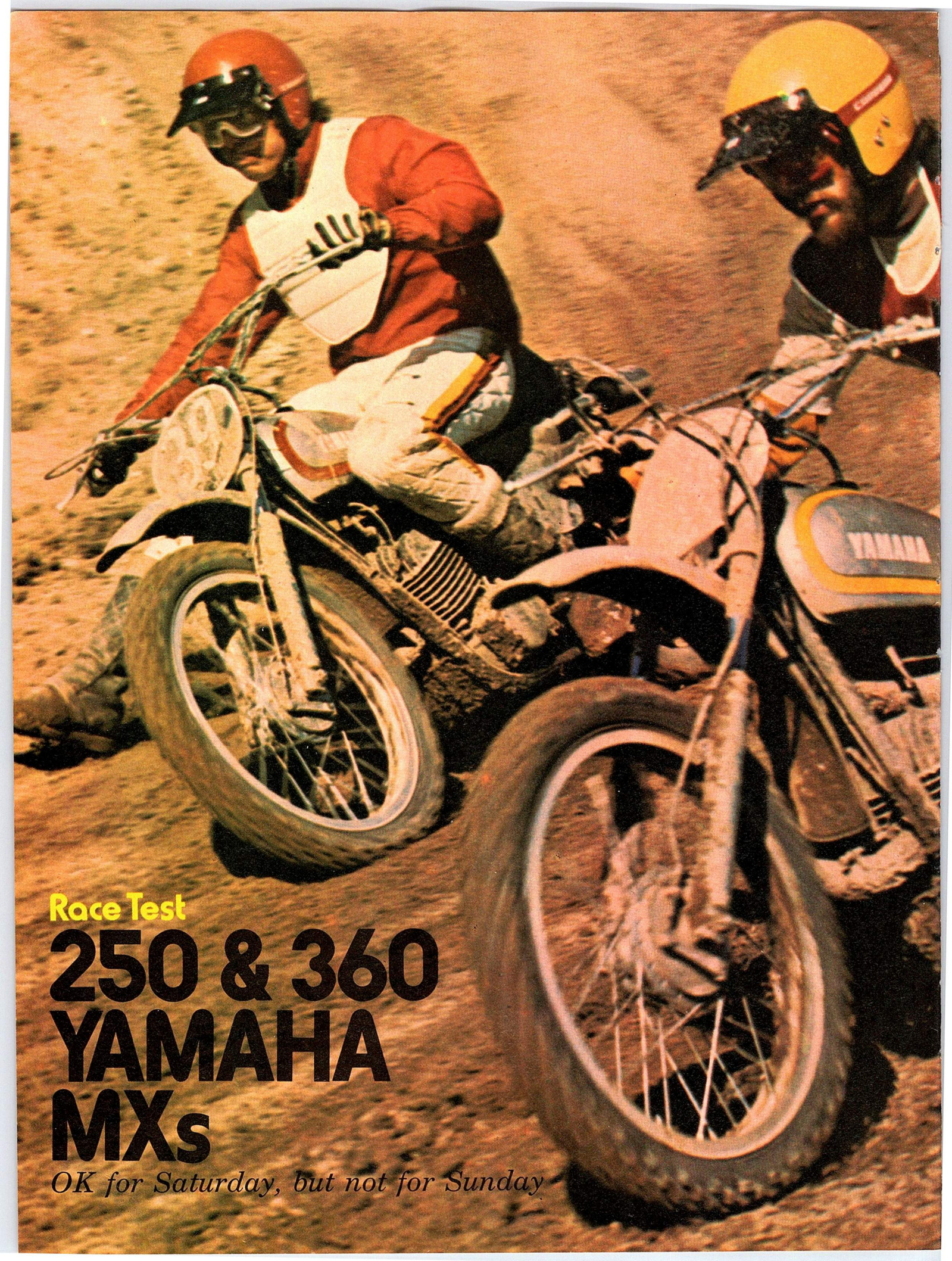
REMAINING PROFESSIONAL EVENTS IN 1973

National Championship Events
June 2—Atlanta, Georgia
June 10—Laurelville, Ohio
August 12—Whitney, Texas
August 18—Pocono, Pennsylvania
August 26—Sligo, Kentucky
September 1—Talladega, Alabama
September 9—New Orleans, Louisiana

International Events
June 24—American Grand Prix—Carlsbad, California
August 5—125cc World Cup—St. Louis, Missouri

Inter-AMA
July 1—Manning Cycle Park, Tooele, Utah
July 6—Los Angeles Coliseum, Los Angeles, California
July 15—Baldwin Motocross Park, Baldwin, Kansas
July 22—Delta Motorsport Park, Delta, Ohio
July 29—Unadilla Valley Sports Center, New Berlin, New York

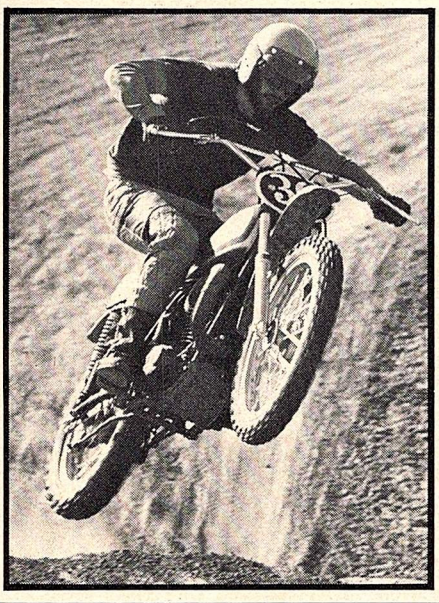
Trans-AMA
September 23—Bryar Sport Moto Park, Loudon, New Hampshire
September 28—John F. Kennedy Stadium, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
October 7—Mid-Ohio Motocross Park, Lexington, Ohio
October 14—Snyder Motocross Park, Washington, Indiana
October 21—Road Atlanta, Gainesville, Georgia
October 28—Orlando Sports Stadium, Orlando, Florida
November 4—Rio Bravo Park, Houston, Texas
November 11—Arizona Cycle Park, Phoenix, Arizona
November 18—Puyallup Raceway Park, Puyallup, Washington
November 25—Carnegie Cycle Park, Livermore, California
December 2—Saddleback Park, Irvine, California

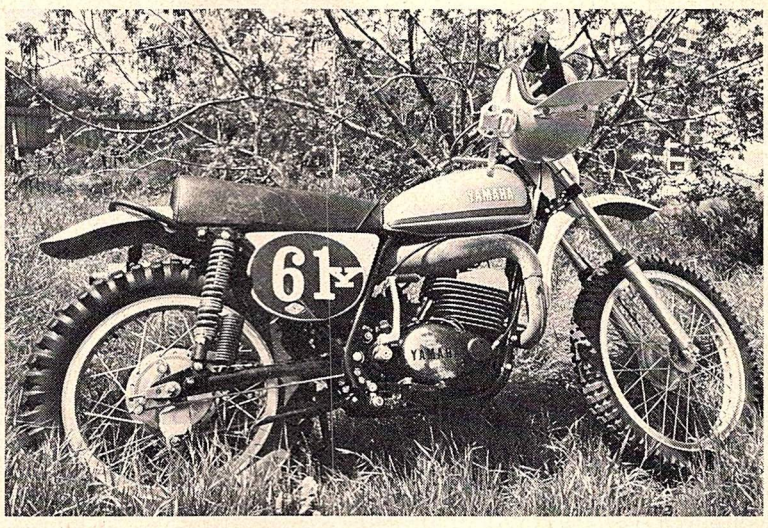


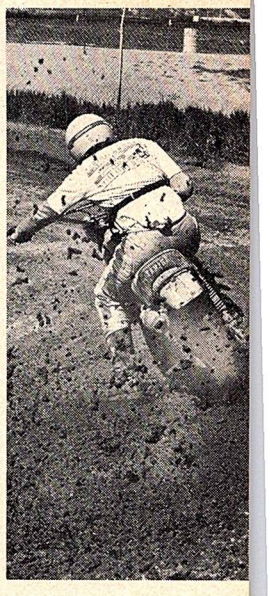
Race Test

250 & 360 YAMAHA MXs

OK for Saturday, but not for Sunday







MX 360, or for the sake of convenience, "the one with the red stripe on the gas tank."

Let's get nostalgic. . . . Remember those shiny chrome shock absorbers that everyone took off their Yamahas immediately and used for doorstops? Or how about all those cozy plaster casts we wore on our arms because our DT-1 MXs highsided us over a berm? Yes, folks, those were the bad old days. Now we have to be content with Yamaha motocrossers that handle decently and have new shock absorbers that are being used as replacements on other bikes. Not a whole lot left to snivel about on the new Yamaha 250 and 360 MXs, two of the most complete, if not yet fully refined, motocross bikes you can buy.

Last year's DT/RT2MX series was a considerable improvement over the earlier Yamaha MXs, which we all knew in our hearts were nothing but stripped at the factory Enduro models. The '72s were expensive for Yamaha to produce and represented the factory's first honest commitment to the motocross rider. But they still weren't right. A friend of ours who owned a '72 DT-2 MX and rode it successfully in the Expert class once remarked, "I sure do like the bike because it's fast and doesn't fall apart, but sometimes when I'm hookin' it down the straight in fifth gear it'll pitch me over the handlebars for no reason at all."

In fact, there was a reason for last year's models' unpredictability. Their powerbands were, shall we politely say, "touchy," and the frames' geometry left the weight too high up . . . among other things.

The 1973 250 and 360 MXs are a lot better motocross bikes than the now-defunct DT/RT bikes. New frames and reshuffled powerbands make the '73s more rideable and much, much safer. As a package, the machines are 95-percent complete. For $1,025 and $1,125 for the 250 and 360 respectively, you get alloy rims, good footpegs, plastic fenders, workable controls, a reasonably light gas tank, a sanitary expansion chamber, and a real live Mikuni carb from the factory. Considering what must be done to some so-called out-of-the-crate racers to achieve the same standard . . . the Yammies are a bargain. Furthermore, we've noticed that several large Yamaha dealers are discounting their MX line considerably. For example, this morning's newspaper lists the 250 for $839 and the 360 for $899. At those prices, you're ripping your dealer off.

Don't misunderstand us and think that, for whatever prices they charge for the bikes in your area, you are getting the Japanese equivalent of a CZ, Husky, Maico, Penton, etc. Yamaha's motocrossers are not yet up to the European standards in the handling department. But they come embarrassingly close.

POWER TO THE GROUND

Probably the most welcome new feature of the Yamaha MXers is their increased ability to get the power to the ground. New cylinders, pipes, and the addition of two petals in the Torque Induction systems move the powerbands down to a more reasonable level. You can actually torque the 250 and 360 and get away with it. As a matter of fact, on your first couple of rides you tend to over-rev the engines because their torquiness is masked by the lack of flywheel effect.

Again, both the Yamacrossers are quick revving, following the method established by all the Japanese manufacturers when they finally got serious about MX machinery. The 360's throttle response isn't quite as volatile as the 250's, simply because the added weight of the Omni-Phase Balancer doesn't allow the revs to build as fast. (More on the OPB later.)

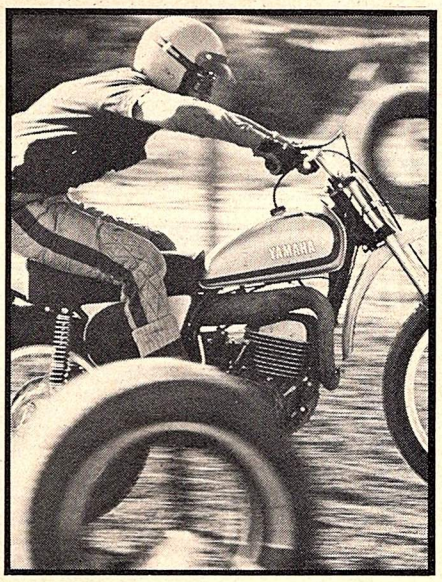
Riders who switch to one of the Yamahas from a European bike may have to ride several laps before even beginning to get accustomed to the quick-revving engines. At first, the instant-on, instant-off reaction is easy to criticize, but after spending some time with the Yammies, you realize that they can be ridden just as fast as machines with more flywheel weight keeping the revs patient. It is simply a matter of adapting your riding style to the Yamahas' frantic rush of power. After spending some time on the bikes, a rider begins to depend on the instantaneous burst to straighten him out on a series of whoops or to help him change lines quickly.

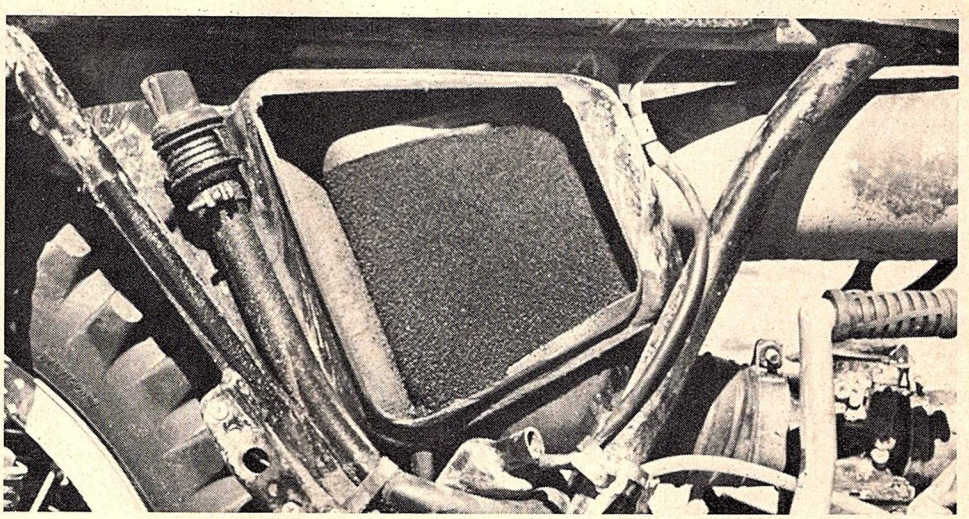
The Yamahas will, however, be at a disadvantage on a hard, slick track until the rider learns to torque them through corners by going one gear higher than normal. Otherwise, such tracks become more of an adventure than they have to be.

As an experiment, we installed an accessory 1.5-pound flywheel (manufactured by Austin-Graydon) on the 250 MX. The added weight slowed down the throttle response enough to make the machine easier for a novice to ride, especially on the aforementioned slick tracks. Most experienced riders will likely want to keep the power rush of the stock bike, since an expert can use it to his advantage.

The MX 250 has enough power to win. It is not a blindingly fast 250, but the disparity in power between the Yamaha and the fastest bikes in its class (Honda Elsinore, Bultaco Pursang, and 250 CZ) is not so great that the Yamaha's rider is put at a disadvantage before he even starts the race. Permit us a slightly inscrutable statement: The Yamaha's power is about "average" for a 250. The bike seems faster than it actually is because all the ponies are available in a giant rush. Don't misinterpret this statement as encouragement to tamper with your Yammie's porting. It doesn't need it.

Mostly due to sheer cubic inches and the added inertia of the Omni-Phase Balancer, a device to limit engine vibra-





Air cleaner lives under right side cover, but is more accessible if the seat is removed. Hose is Autolube filler.

tion, the power characteristics of the MX 360 more closely approximate those of a European 400 MXer. As you should expect from any big-incher, there's a good spread of power from just above idle right up to the higher revs, to allow enough flexibility to both scoot out of corners quickly and banzai down a straight in fifth gear without tampering with overall gearing. Still, compared to the European bikes, Yamaha's 360 has very little flywheel effect, and thus, you will have to spend some time doing wheelies and sliding sideways while learning to use the power.

Yamaha's Omni-Phase Balancer is a feature not shared with the 250, simply because the smaller displacement bike doesn't need it. There are many riders who claim that the OPB isn't even needed on the 360, because the vibration of a 360, any 360, isn't troublesome enough to warrant the installation of a reasonably complex system of counterbalances in the crankcase. You'll find that many MX 360 owners are removing the OPB to allow the engine to rev even quicker, and get rid of one more item that could conceivably malfunction.

Because of the OPB, the 360 vibrates only slightly less than other Open class machines. But we suggest that you leave it on, only because the added drag on the crankshaft makes the bike easier to ride, and even the slight decrease in engine vibration is welcome in the last few laps of a 20-minute moto.

Another feature that the 360 doesn't share with the 250 is a built-in compression release for starting. When you first kick over the 360 it feels like a 125, and your first thoughts are, "Damn, the rings are stuck," and you see a Saturday afternoon winging its way out of your life. When the kickstarter is depressed, a cable is tugged which activates the compression release for the full stroke of the lever. We've heard riders argue that this release setup is yet another thing to break and is a fine example of the Japanese fascination with "features." Regardless, the MX 360 is the easiest starting big-bore MXer that you'll ever flap a boot over.

Both the 250 and 360 are lubricated by the Autolube system, but the owner's manual recommends that the gas in the tank be pre-mixed at 30:1 in addition. If you're going to mix oil and gas anyway, why bother with the Autolube? We suspect that very few Yamaha riders are using the 30:1 mix in the tank, but are simply running straight gas and relying on the Autolube pump for full lubrication. As with Yamaha motocrossers in the past, the hot setup for a serious racer seems to be the removal of the Autolube tank and pump, and running pre-mix in the tank.

Oil consumption rates of both bikes are rather high, so please fill the oil tank between motos if you choose to keep the automatic oiling system. Otherwise, you'll be burdened with a one-piece engine.

HANDLING

To an extent, the Yamahas' power characteristics influence their handling. Both machines are front end light, more so the 250, so when exiting a corner, leaving the gate or going off a jump they have a tendency to rear up. Starting wheelies and "Hi-Ho Silver" jumps are easily avoided if the rider lays his cajones on the gas tank, part of the reorientation process mentioned earlier. But in corners, the problem is magnified by substandard damping in the front forks.

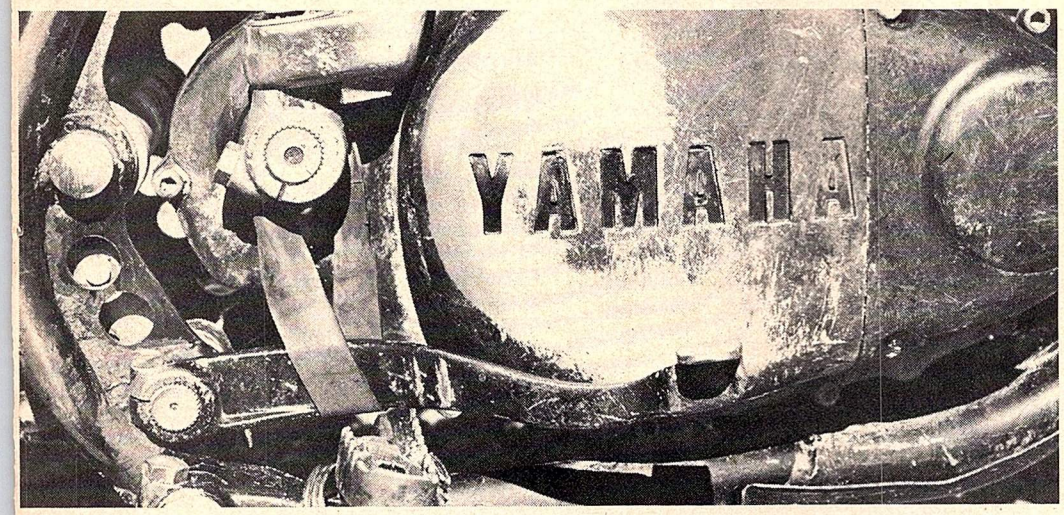
It's easy enough to climb up on the tank to keep the front end down coming out of a corner, but even if that's accomplished, the wheel tends to crab and plow because the power comes on so instantaneously that the wheel doesn't have time to start rolling, instead it skitters sideways. If the forks were more successful at keeping the knobs in the ground, this phenomenon would be far less noticeable.

Because of the questionable fork damping, all corner-taking is imprecise. You just can't plant the front wheel in the apex of a turn and pivot the bike around it, nor does the bike slide very well. The saving grace of the 250 and 360 MXs is the fact that the power is always right there and usually can scoot the rear end of the bike around before the front wheel starts doing tricks. Occasionally, the front end will start to wash out in a corner, so you gas it to get the rear end to swing around, then the front wheel lifts off the ground and you do some stupendous Brad Lackey imitations. Since the 360 has a slightly heavier engine, the additional weight biased toward the front keeps the wheel on the ground better, but the problem is still evident.

An expedient partial cure for the fork queasiness is a refilling with a decent grade of oil, but you will have to tamper even further to be able to note a marked improvement. Replacing the stock fork springs with Ceriani 33-pound springs seems to help for some riders, but you'll have to cut about three windings off the tightly wound end to get them to fit. Then experiment with different oils. We've tried several Yamahas with modified forks; most were improvements, but even at best, the imprecision remains.

We have no way of knowing whether or not Yamaha's new Thermal Flow shocks actually keep the oil cooler, but that question is purely academic since the units are among the best behaving you can get on a production bike. The added unsprung weight of the reservoir and extra oil doesn't seem to have any blatant bad effects on the bikes' handling, but we noticed that the rear ends of the Yamahas, especially the 360's, would hop around like a 380 CZ's if the spring preload was set any stiffer than the intermediate position.

Two nice features: The shocks are rebuildable, and the fluid in them is



A strip of inner tube mounted thusly puts tension on the brake lever and helps the rider feather the pedal.

MX 250, the yellow striper.

relatively easy to change, providing more latitude for the rider who wants to fiddle with his shock damping.

With 56-inch wheelbases, both the 250 and 360 are stable through fast ruts and whoopdies, even though the front ends want to wander. You have to pay attention to the business at hand when riding the Yammie MXers, because of the instant power, weight bias, and gnarly forks. Each of them could also stand to lose 10 pounds. As a consequence the bikes are more tiring to ride than machines with better-integrated frame and suspension components. Still, they're a far sight better than Yamaha's previous motocross bikes.

OTHER IMPORTANT THINGS

Yamaha riders the world over are cursing the man who designed the rear brakes on last year's Yammies. Not because the binders didn't stop the bikes, it's just that they're over-designed and work *too* well; rear wheel lockup is painfully easy. We mean to say "painfully," too. Blazing into a corner, the rear full-floater would lock and stall the engine . . . a common sight is a Yamaha rider sailing down the track, frantically trying to bump start his bike, with visions of highsides and strawberried elbows dancing in his head. Same brakes this year, gang.

If the Yamaha engines had heavier flywheels, the touchy brakes wouldn't cause such problems, but once the engine gets low down in the rev range, a locked up rear wheel stops it cold. As with the DT/RT 2 MXs, a decent cure can be effected by removing a one-inch section from the actuating arm on the rear backing plate, but the factory should have done something to tame the brake on the '73 models.

When their sheer stopping power is evaluated, Yamaha's brakes are among the best to be found on any motocross bike. Both front and rear are fairly well-waterproofed, and the front unit's effectiveness is almost legendary; smooth and progressive, it gets the job done. After learning to feather the brakes, clutch and throttle simultaneously, a Yamaha rider will be stopped faster than George McGovern trying to get into the White House.

Early production models of the 250 and 360 MX series, some of which may still be at dealers, had faulty locater pins on the gear shift drum. Symptoms include difficulty in downshifting into the lower gears. All Yamaha dealers are aware of the malady and will replace the parts under warranty if you ask politely.

When all the pins are nestling properly, the gearboxes shifted easily with or without using the clutch. Both the 250 and 360 share the same transmission and the ratios work equally well with both powerplants. The 250 had no trouble pulling fifth gear.

LIVING WITH THEM

When the Yamahas are new, constant attention must be paid to the spokes and chain. Alloy rims take a while to seat, so the spokes should be checked frequently, especially on the first day of riding. After seating, they stay tight and the Yammie wheels are as strong as any, though the valenced rims should be de-mudded between motos.

Same for the chain; it stretches like Silly Putty for several rides, then only occasional adjustment is needed.

The only parts on our test bikes that were vulnerable to vibration loosening were the silencer clamp bolts. Replacing the stock bolts with Made In U.S.A. aircraft lock bolts will help keep the silencer on; please do so because the Yamahas are wretched sounding with the silencers leaking.

We were initially impressed with the Yamaha air filters, but after having to wash them several times, our enthusiasm waned rapidly. They are cheaply made and lose their shape after being cleaned and oiled several times. Additionally, the water drain hole is too small and is located where it is easily clogged with crud.

We found out the hard way on a rainy Wednesday. The throttles on both Yamahas started sticking, causing more than one crash and a partial heart seizure when the 360's carb slide stuck wide open on a steep downhill. After dismantling the filters, we found that water was sneaking past them all along the bottom edge of both elements. The intake tracts and carburetors were full of muddy water. While the stock filter is sufficient for dry riding conditions, we suggest replacing it with a K&N (Yamaha owners say they work best), and drilling one or two more drain holes in the bottom of the canister for wet motos.

All the controls—clutch, brakes, footpegs, kill button, cables, throttle twistgrip, etc.—are extremely functional and indicate that Yamaha is starting to pay attention to what riders need, rather than installing what looks best. You will want to change the handlebars, though, because the stockers are too low and have an awkward bend by the crossbrace. A dachshund would probably find them comfortable. The only other bitch we have is the expansion chamber. As it sexily snakes over the cylinder head, it painfully burns your leg.

CONCLUSION

Even with the complaints we have with the Yamaha 250 and 360 MXs, they are bikes we wouldn't mind owning ourselves. At the price some dealers are charging, a racer can buy a brand-new Yammie, Ceriani forks (if he wants to get really extravagant), new leathers and a helmet for less than the price of a new high-falootin' motocross bike. He will have to sacrifice some precision in handling, but the Yamahas are custom-made for racing on a budget.

Comparing the 250 and 360 to each other, the 360 is more competitive in its class. Though almost identical to the 250, it's broader powerband, slower

revving engine and more balanced weight distribution make it easier to ride.

Basically, the Yamahas are fun Sunday afternoon play-around-at-the-MX-track bikes. They are not for the professional. ●

YAMAHA MX 360

SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE: $1,125
ENGINE TYPE, INDUCTION: Two-cycle, piston-port, reed induction
ACTUAL DISPLACEMENT: 351cc
BORE AND STROKE: 80 x 70mm
COMPRESSION RATIO: 7.43:1
CARBURETOR: VM34SC Mikuni
CLAIMED HORSEPOWER/RPM: N/A
PRIMARY DRIVE: Gear
GEARBOX/SHIFTING: 5-speed, left side shift
GEARBOX RATIOS: 1)2.25:1 2)1.65:1 3)1.261:1 4)1.0:1 5)0.793:1
AIR FILTER: Oiled foam
ELECTRICAL: CDI
LUBRICATION: Autolube automatic injection
FUEL CAPACITY: 2.4 gallons
SUSPENSION: Yamaha forks/Yamaha Thermal Flow shocks
TIRES/RIMS
front: 3.00x21 Dunlop, alloy
rear: 4.00x18 Dunlop, alloy
WHEELBASE: 55.9 inches
WEIGHT actual: 247 pounds
claimed: 234 pounds
front wheel: 47 percent
rear wheel: 53 percent
STARTING: Primary kick, right side
COUNTRY OF MANUFACTURE: Japan
DISTRIBUTOR:
Yamaha International Corp.
6600 Orangethorpe
Buena Park, California 90620
COST OF REPLACEMENT PISTON, RINGS: $15.00, $5.25
COST OF REPLACEMENT LINER AND/OR CYLINDER: $79.00

●

YAMAHA MX 250

SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE: $1,025
ENGINE TYPE, INDUCTION: Two-cycle, piston-port, reed induction
ACTUAL DISPLACEMENT: 246cc
BORE AND STROKE: 70 x 64mm
COMPRESSION RATIO: 7.05:1
CARBURETOR: VM30SC Mikuni
CLAIMED HORSEPOWER/RPM: N/A
PRIMARY DRIVE: Gear
GEARBOX/SHIFTING: 5-speed, left side shift
GEARBOX RATIOS: 1)2.25:1 2)1.65:1 3)1.261:1 4)1.0:1 5)0.793:1
AIR FILTER: Oiled foam
ELECTRICAL: CDI
LUBRICATION: Autolube automatic injection
FUEL CAPACITY: 2.4 gallons
SUSPENSION: Yamaha forks/Yamaha Thermal Flow shocks
TIRES/RIMS
front: 3.00x21 Dunlop, alloy
rear: 4.00x18 Dunlop, alloy
WHEELBASE: 55.9 inches
WEIGHT actual: 237 pounds
claimed: 227 pounds
front wheel: 44 percent
rear wheel: 56 percent
STARTING: Primary kick, right side
COUNTRY OF MANUFACTURE: Japan
DISTRIBUTOR:
Yamaha International Corp.
6600 Orangethorpe
Buena Park, California 90620
COST OF REPLACEMENT PISTON, RINGS: $13.40, $5.00
COST OF REPLACEMENT LINER AND/OR CYLINDER: $69.00

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BAZ'S

Cont'd. from page 9

figured that since I had held the very heart of this beast in my hand only a few hours before, rehabilitation should have been slow and painstaking. Hoped nothing was wrong.

It took several minutes to get up the nerve to slip it into gear and the resulting clunk almost gave me heart failure. Then I remembered it always made this noise when it was cold. Like petting a bunny, I eased out the clutch and got the bike under way.

For a while I just blipped around on the practice track out by the river not wanting to put too much strain on the new components. Then I figured, heck, if it breaks, it breaks, and I gassed it. First second third fourth fifth. Beautiful. In fact it didn't even pop out of fourth like it did sometimes before.

I did a few easy laps using the clutch just to work in any junk I might have left inside, then I pulled another holeshot, this time w/o clutch. Once again all five cogs clicked home just like New York. Happiness is a long loft in third on a fixed bike.

With only a few crude implements and my own two hands, I had conquered the forces of evil that lurked inside my gearbox. Super Wrench strikes again. ●

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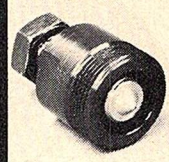

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DB-10	☐	UNILEVER CLUTCH and BRAKE CONTROLS – Unbreakable –	ea. 6.50
DB-11	☐	TORSTEN HALLMAN *GRAN PRIX* LEATHER PANTS – with plastic knee and shin guards – Waist size____	79.95
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MONTESA'S EUROPEAN PROTOTYPE

Star Trek technology?

By Paul Boudreau

A few years ago, Montesa made a 250cc racing motorcycle that went down in history as being the most loved and hated, praised and cussed, caressed and kicked piece of iron in the business. It was truly bizarre. The motor generated a tremendous amount of power anywhere you wanted it and the whole machine handled like the proverbial baby carriage. Unfortunately, the booger had a few idiosyncracies which did not fall softly on the hearts of its owners.

To say the Montesa was hard to start would do it an injustice. Word has it that the Montesa owners were always first to arrive at a track so they could have plenty of kicking and pushing time. One of the more entertaining sights to see, in the old days, was the contingent of 'Tesa racers working on the side of a hill in a mass effort to get some fire. Every time one would give a slight bark, all the riders would stop and watch to see if the blessed one could hold onto that dim flicker of life.

Once the rider did get some life out of the machine, keeping it alive became the next chore. They ran the old Spanish Amal monobloc carb and the thing would load up at the slightest provocation. The standard practice was to lean the bike over on its side and starve the main jet to clear the engine. When the concentric carb came along, the rider was left no other task than to sit holding the throttle wide open and staring straight ahead with the best poker face he could muster while the engine heaved and choked and embarrassed everybody.

But riding the thing was a stone gas. There was nothing like twisting off a fist full of power from the half-turn throttle and laying it into a big, wide sweeper in a long, smooth slide. Like dyin' and goin' to heaven. Right about this time the piston would seize. The Montesa had a bad habit of committing suicide for all sorts of weird reasons. It ate carb slides on a regular basis and the plugs would foul just to drive the owner crazy. In short, reliability and ease of ownership were not the Montesa's long suits.

What were the Montesa people doing about this, you may well ask? Not much. Developmental work on their Cappra series was minimal. The factory devoted only about 20 percent of its time and money to the racers, their main effort being the production of trials machinery. All their top people were into trials riding. The result was the development of what many call the finest trials bike made: The 250 Cota.

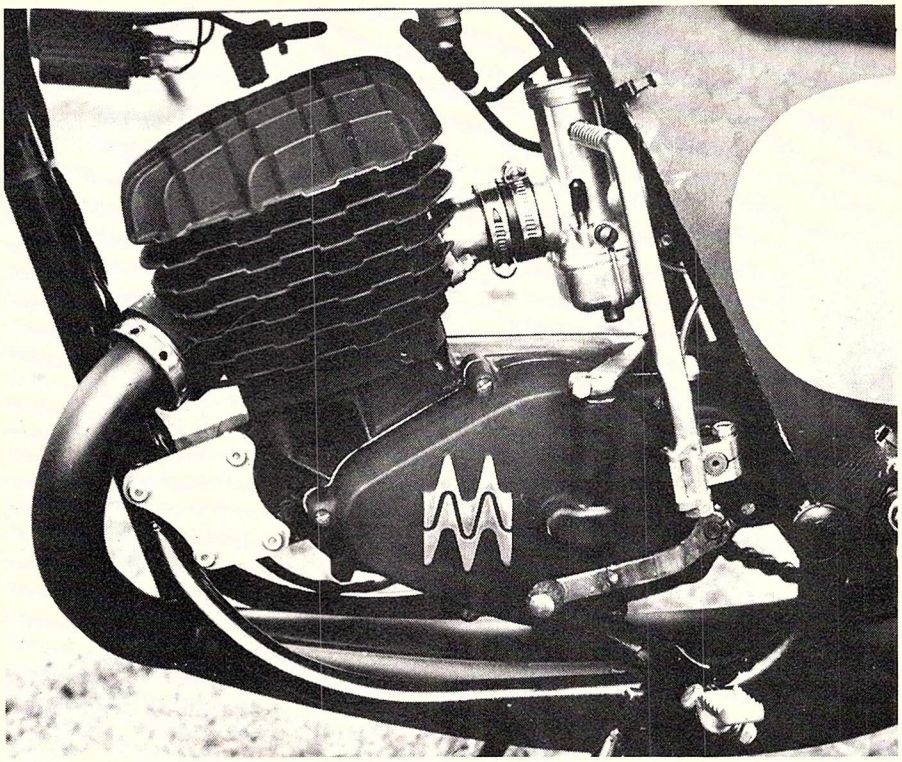
Two years ago somebody at Montesa got smart. Either that or they started listening to someone who'd been smart all along. Any way you want to look at it, things changed. They threw ALL their R&D work toward the goal of

producing a competitive Grand Prix class motocrosser. This meant war against the mighty Japanese factories.

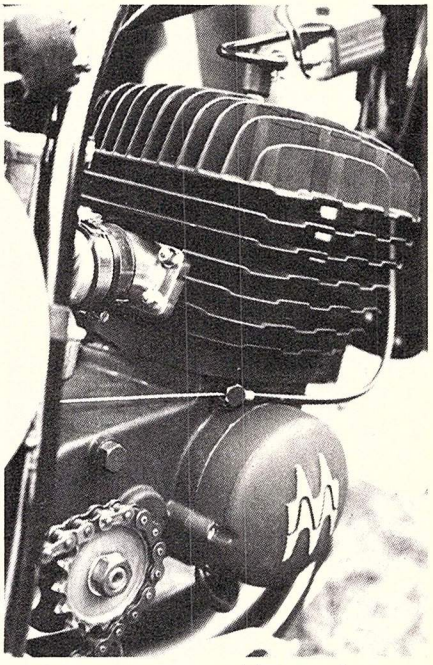
In the past three years, Suzuki has walked away with everything. Everything. Yamaha is now in the ballpark with Kawasaki knocking on the door and Honda putting together what may be the hottest entry yet. They do it with money. Lots and lotsa money. Robert's Suzuki costs $15,000. If he puts that into a tree, they'll give him another, maybe two. With the money Honda put into developing their Elsinore, they could have bought Montesa, lock, stock and Swiss cheese.

With high hopes and a low budget, Montesa went to work. The plan was simple: Develop the lightest, best handling, most responsive, tractable, dependable machine in the business, put the best rider they could dig up on it, and win the World Championship.

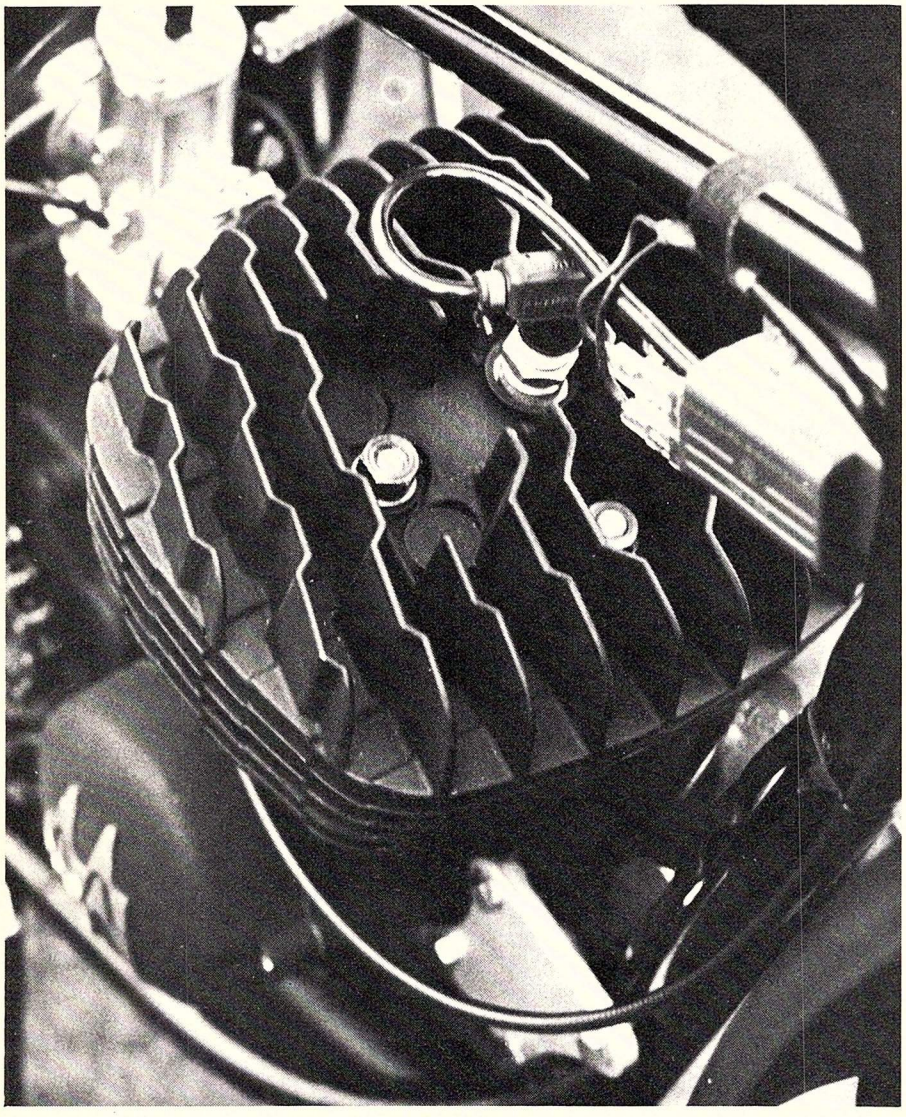
Last March, at DeDuinen, Hechtel, Belgium, Kalevi Vehkonen rode a 360cc Montesa prototype to first overall in the International motocross held there. The victory was decisive. In the second moto, Vehkonen opened a 45-second



This motor attracted more attention at its first meeting than a porcupine in a steambath.



Super-sano cases and internal flywheel Motoplat make the power unit small like a bunny.



Ripple fin design is functional as well as buco trick-looking.

lead over a field that included World Champion Roger DeCoster, Jaak Van-Velthoven, Hakan Andersson, and Husqvarna's super-crosser, Heikki Mikkola. They had come close two weeks before at Lummer, Belgium, where Vehkonen had won the first moto and was leading the second when he lost case pressure. Here the field was even more impressive: DeCoster, Robert, Geobers, Aberg, Mikkola and some kid named Jim Pomeroy. Clearly the Montesa people meant serious business.

The seriousness started a year earlier with the first prototype. It was a rather conventional design using the basic 250cc Montesa engine and frame, but with lots of titanium and much hand machining of parts. It was expensive, but if you're playing the big bucks game, you gotta go by the big bucks rules. What amazed everyone was how well the Montesa entry did in the 1972 World Championship. Vehkonen finished fourth behind Robert, Andersson and Geboers, all on Japanese factory machines. This put Montesa one up on Husqvarna, CZ and the Russians and it was all done despite the fact that Vehkonen received an eye injury in the Spanish GP which bugged him all year. Plus the bike was plagued by broken frames, titanium being the tricky stuff that it is. What should have been a disaster turned out to be a good year.

In the meantime, back in Barcelona, the R&D department, headed by super engineer Pedro Pi, the man behind the Cota, was doing its homework. They were taking all the information gained from racing their first prototype and plugging it into the design of their new 250cc machine for the 1973 season. The frame is chrome moly and much stronger than the earlier ones. This is due, primarily, the the F.I.M. weight limit of 88 kilos (194 pounds) for the 250 class bikes which enables the small factories to build a stronger chassis.

The bulk of the R&D work, however, went into the engine. Montesa needed a motor that would do it to the powerhouses from Japan and hold together long enough to bring home the bucks. Obviously the standard design would have to go. The power was there but the weight and reliability factors were not up to competitive levels.

They came up with a design that could be a year ahead of anything the other factories are racing. It looks nothing like the old Montesa engine, even to the extent of a new monogram on the sidecases. The fin pattern is a ripple design that effectively increases the cooling surface area and reduces engine noise. Case width is kept to a minimum by the use of an internal flywheel Motoplat ignition system and a very compact gearbox.

Because the powerplant is so small, it allows a great deal of latitude in engine/frame relationships. By merely switching mounting plates, the motor can be moved fore and aft or up and down to alter weight bias and thus change the handling characteristics. This feature is extremely useful when developing a prototype on a limited budget because it allows the rider or engineer to make subtle changes without rebuilding the entire motorcycle.

When you get smarts, it seems you get smarts all the way. They finally canned the Amal and went out and bought a Bing. The Bing carburetor is considered by most European factories to be the finest racing carb made. Unlike the Amal, they're easy to tune and, once adjusted, hold their tune and pull well at low rpm. Since switching to Bing, Montesa has encountered no carburetion problems.

Titanium is used extensively throughout the machine to hold its weight down. Handlebars, fork legs, triple clamps, axles, nuts and bolts are all fabricated from this high-falootin' material. Fenders and body parts are Made in U.S.A. plastic and the rims are Akront alloy. Akront, by the by, is feverishly trying to produce a non-clogging type rim, similar to the DID items being used on most GP machinery these days. The Montesa proto will incorporate these as soon as they're made available.

But a bike is just a stone without a rider and Montesa was having rider problems. Their number one rider, Kalevi Vehkonen, got some mud in his eye at the 1972 Spanish Grand Prix and by now it had developed into a very serious infection that threatened his racing career. Last winter the rumor was that the doctors were telling Vehkonen he could not race anymore, which would put the Montesa racing effort down the tubes. In reality the situation was much more under control. It seems Barcelona is the eyeball capitol of the world. All the hot-shot eye doctors in the business hang around there because it's where the action is. Even some super-heavy-duty Arab sheiks go there to get their peepers tuned, so it was only natural that Vehkonen got the full treatment. Vehkonen's condition was cleared up in short order and he was pronounced 100-percent fit for the 1973 season.

What does this all add up to? Montesa is out to shake up the troops not with big pesos but with cubic brainpower. The Japanese have taken some of the enchantment from Grand Prix motocross by bulldozing huge sums of

What they got and what we get. The one on the right is the Vehkonen Replica being offered in this country.

money into the production of a few prototype ultimates, then buying the best talent to demolish the competition. Right now the European factories are in a tremendous dilemma. They are rushing through prototype programs, producing machines that don't work and, in the process, further alienating their best riders who in turn snap up the rosy factory contracts from Japan.

As the spiral continues, Montesa's position becomes better and brighter. First, they are starting with a clean slate and a new machine. This means they are not slaves to old designs and outdated concepts but rather are open to any idea that will work. Second, they are Europeans racing European machinery in Europe. In any sport, the home team has the advantage and the hip European spectator knows the difference between the good guys and the bad guys. Third, they are winning races. Last year Vehkonen scored points in eight out of 11 championship meetings and finished fourth in the series. This year Montesa claimed a moral victory in Lummer and a decisive victory in DeDuinen. Needless to say, the Japanese are nervous.

Business end of the GP machine. The shocks look dinky but work fine.

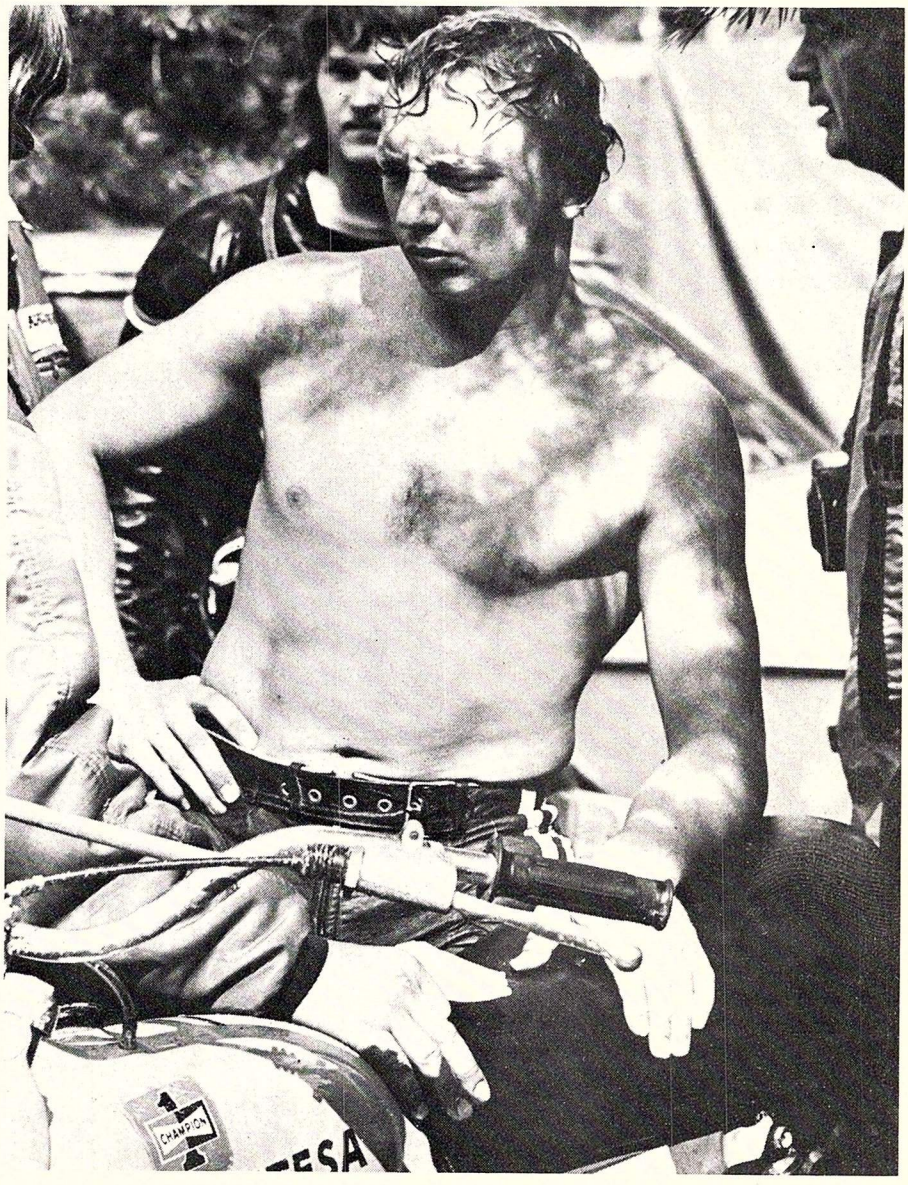
To the American rider, this means a new bike to think about. The Montesa prototype racing in Europe is not far from the Vehkonen Replicas being sold in this country. Because the bikes are all hand-assembled, turnover time between prototype and production models is small. The Japanese factories have never been able to mass-produce anything close to what they're racing in Europe because the machinery they use costs so much to retool that production of such bikes would be impractical. The bike Montesa is racing right now will be produced for export next year.

Montesa's racing program in this country has also been drastically overhauled. Last year Peter Lamppu and Mike Runyard rode some trick Cappras in AMA pro events and did very well. Because of a small budget, however, Montesa was only able to provide the machines and parts, leaving Mike and Peter to do their own wrenching. In pro racing, this is definitely not the warm setup. Letting Peter Lamppu fix his own bike is like letting your parrot fix the TV.

This year things will be different. Xavier Jordi, executive director of Montesa Motors in this country, has announced a dealer-sponsored racing program that will help the good riders get better. Vehkonen Replica bikes will be released to dealers who can sponsor riders in different areas of the country. This means that instead of one or two top pros being poorly sponsored in the southwest, ten riders nationwide can pick up good dealer sponsorships and get support from the factory. Billy Grossi, Bob's younger brother, got in on this deal and is messing up minds in northern California competition. In New England, Joe Castango, first in the hearts of all northeast CZ riders, is being sponsored on Charlie Ballou's Vehkonen Montesa.

This summer, Jo Lammers, the Dutch 250 champion, will be coming to the States to contest the Inter-AMA series and both he and Vehkonen will be here with bells on for the Trans-AMA races in the fall. If things go well in Europe, the American series should be very interesting.

Four years ago, Montesa had the gimmies for trials and they didn't rest till they had a world championship. Now they've got the motocross bug and they're hunkering down for a fight for the gold. If they pull it off, and they could, it would provide the European factories with much needed incentive to wrench themselves from the catatonic state of future shock they've been in since last season, and the Japanese would have to seriously reevaluate their yen for motocross. ●



Ask the man who rides one. Kalevi Vehkonen, the long shot who could bring it all home to Spain.

By Paul Boudreau

ALMA MATER-CROSS

Pack a Jofa in my lunch, mom.

Think of it. You're in high school and you're trying to score but you're getting nowhere. You can't play hoop very well, you didn't make the football team, your dad won't let you drive the car and Betty Lou just dumped you for the captain of the chess team. Life is really getting you down and there's no way in sight to get out from under the hassle.

Then one day the god of knobbies comes down and lays his hand on your head. You're sitting in home room and the teacher is rattling off announcements from the mimeographed sheet like he's done for the past 26 years, and you're fighting off sleep but you can't help dreaming about how you'd like to bring your CZ to school and show everybody what kind of stuff you've got. Your mind is picking up the background . . .

". . . the northwest stairwell. Anyone caught in this area during third and fourth periods will be placed on probation.

"There will be a locker inspection today at 2:30. All students whose names begin with G through Q will report to room 212 before home room check.

"This Friday there will be a motorcross on the athletic field. Anyone interested in participating should contact Orvill Squatt of the Varsity Club.

"The Red Cross Club will sponsor a bleed-in this . . ."

Motorcross? MOTOCROSS! They're going to have a motocross right here at Snotberry High! I'll be a star! Wait till Betty Lou sees me stuff that fag chess player right up his torque pipe. Farrr OUT!

In case you think this is just fantasy, let me assure you that it can and DID happen. Somebody at Inglewood High School, in Inglewood, California, got very brave and proposed such an event to the school administration. What boggles the mind is that the administration accepted the proposal. What doubly boggles the mind is that the student body pulled the whole thing off without a hitch.

When we saw the field, it looked like any other school-type playground. A bunch of tootsies in gym suits were chasing a ball and making a lot of noise and a dozen or so lanky dudes in shorts were hanging around an oval track, jumping and throwing things and doing a lot of running. The place looked normal except, that is, for the three jumps, a mudhole and about 40 motocross machines lined up on the infield of the baseball diamond.

Preparing a motocross course on a school athletic field presents problems unique to the sport. Dirt had to be trucked in along with some railroad ties to build the jumps. Course markers, a starting rubber band, trophies, ambulance and flagmen all had to be scrounged. Local help was obtained from Bill Krause Honda and Bob Ketcham's Sporting Goods provided the

brass. The administrative and legal hassles were handled by sundry principals and vice-principals.

Organizationally the race was handled very well. Better, in fact, than many of the so-called "pro" races we've been to. The race started on time and all the heats were run off without any delays. Nobody crossed the track and best of all, no one got hurt. There are promoters in the business who would do well to observe the way these kids put on a race. The school administration was so impressed with the event that they've given a tentative OK for another race to be held next year.

As a motocross, the race was not on a par with the regular Sunday go-round. There were only about a half-dozen kids who looked like they could hold their own against the Sunday hotshoes. But as a high school extracurricular activity, it was mind-blowing.

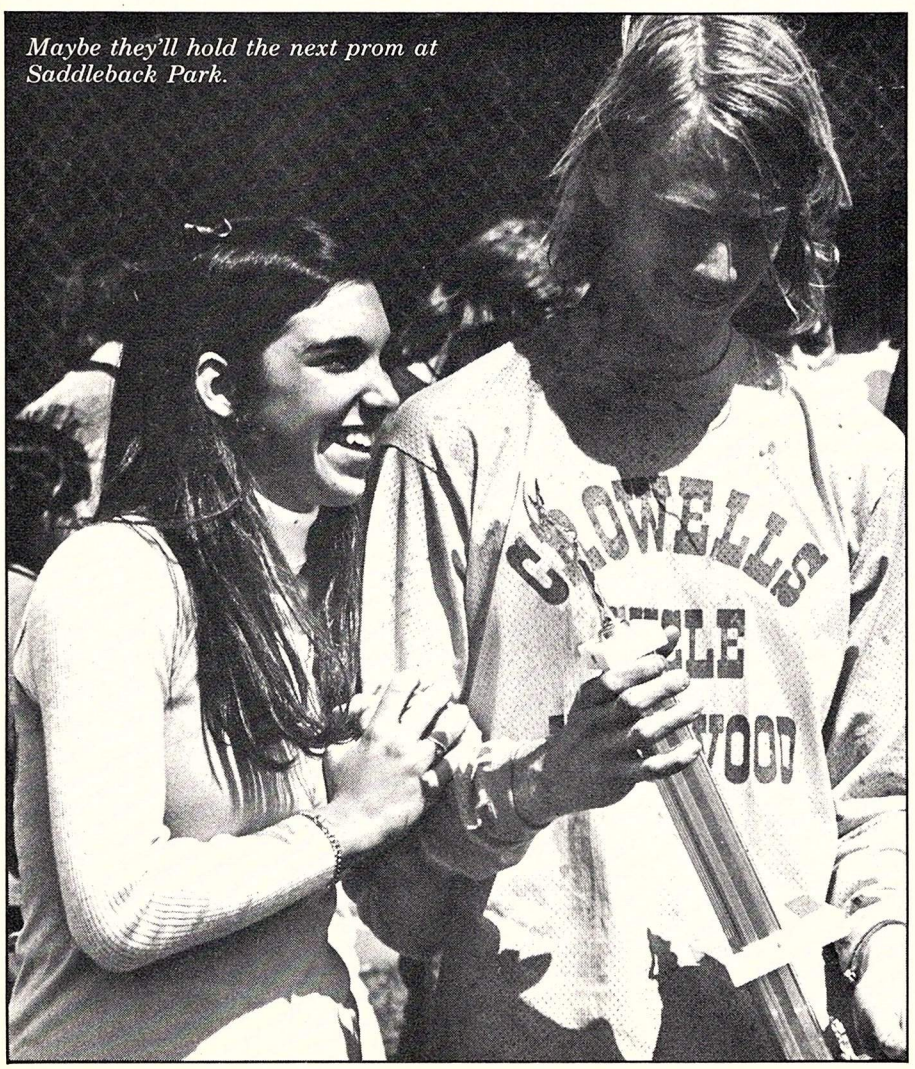
Here were guys just like you and me, muddling their way through school all week looking for a place to put their heads. To them, motocross was a weekend sport, something they did in the outside world. They're hot stuff on Sunday, but when Monday rolls around, they're just more bodies to congest the hallways and give the monitors a hard time. No place to shine. No way to show the gang how to turn the machine into liquid motion.

Suddenly it was all there. The course, the bikes, the jumps, the mud, good

"That's the guy who aced the last algebra exam . . . revenge!"

This 125 'Sang rider won because everyone else in his class fell on the slippery grass. Nice profile.

When was the last time you saw a 250 Maico flying through the air at your high school?

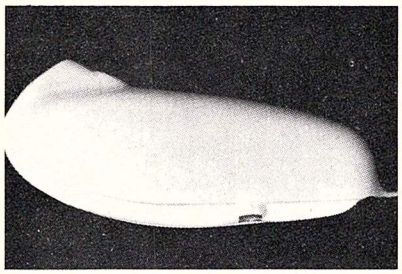


Maybe they'll hold the next prom at Saddleback Park.

traction and every kid in the school was watching. Those racers, from the expert to the never-did-it-before squid, gave it everything they had. It was like the Motocross des Nations at the cheerleader level. When Johnny took the lead or Jimmy crossed up or Frank fell down or Ed did a wheelie, the crowd went wild. Most of the spectators had never seen a motocross and were plain stoked. Take it in this perspective: There was no money involved, no sponsors, no points—just good old-fashioned glory riding. The best kind.

When it was over, and the awards were given out, the athletic field quickly returned to its scholastic trappings. The girls in gym suits started chasing their ball again and the scrawny jocks returned to their workout. All the principals and deans and assistants and what-have-yous went back to their yelling, trying to make young minds into something they'll never be, and the kids resumed their seemingly endless quest for limelight and the next score.

A few years from now, one of those kids will be standing on the field right about where the second jump was. He'll be in his cap and gown and the Mayor or somebody will be telling him what a great opportunity awaits the high school grad, etc., etc. But his mind will be on motocross as it always is and he won't hear. Instead he'll look down and see a rusty old B-8ES lying in the grass between his shiny, rented shoes and he'll think about the day he won his race in front of all the kids. Recess was never the same after that. ●



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KARSMAKERS *Cont'd. from page 20*

small one." So I ordered a small beer and he said, "Well, I ordered you a beer—I gave you a beer. Now you have to give me one beer." I said, "OK, I'll buy you one beer—a big one." (Laughter) So that was his third or fourth one already . . .

MXA: Jimmy doesn't mind.

PK: No, Jimmy liked it. So after the third or fourth one he got excited and he said, "Can I have one more?" I said, "Of course." So I bought him five or six more beers. He was all drunk, you know, the night before the race. (Laughter). So, on Sunday he won the first heat when my throttle stuck. In the second heat he got second, right . . . yeah, I think he got second. Tim Hart ran into the lake and Jimmy got second. That's right. So after the race, he said, "It worked, man, it worked! The beer really worked! Relax and get drunk before a race." (Lots of laughter)

MXA: What do you think of Jimmy?

PK: He's a good guy. Wild, but . . .

MXA: We saw a picture of him chasing the AMA referee through the pits with a rubber snake.

PK: Brad Lackey did that to me in Orlando. I was so scared.

MXA: Really?

PK: I had never seen those things before. He showed it to me. He said, "Come over here." Ugghhh. I was so

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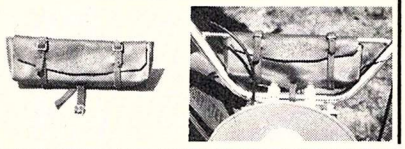

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scared. My heart, after one hour was still pounding.

MXA: That would work better than trying to get somebody drunk before a race. Throwing a snake at them.

PK: Yeah. I didn't even think about the race. I was so scared.

MXA: Do you do anything to the guys like that in the pits or on the starting line to them to make them nervous?

PK: I never do that. I do, if I see somebody on a bike at the start, and I see something is bad so he might crash or might get hurt—I tell them, of course . . .

MXA: In other words, you don't try to psych them out.

PK: I did it several times in the Dutch Championship. Just before the start I would say to them, "You look so pale today. Are you sick or something?" Things like that, you know . . . when the Championship is real tight, then I try different ways. Sometimes it works. Sometimes it works very good.

MXA: Who do you think is going to win the 250 World Championship?

PK: Well, it's either Heikki Mikkola or Joel Robert. I think, though, that it will be Joel Robert, again. Although Heikki is very fast 250 rider, very fast and I know that he works harder, but there's a difference. Joel is more talented, so he doesn't have to train as hard, but you know, it's all how much

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good luck Heikki has and how much bad luck Joel has. I think it must be one of the two.

MXA: How about the 500?

PK: It will be Ake or Roger DeCoster. It's so hard to say. Probably Ake.

MXA: Do you think Ake can get used to his Yamaha?

PK: Oh, yeah, yeah. But, Ake is always a slow season starter. In the beginning of every season he is not so fast, especially this year, since he has to get used to his Yamaha. But after two or three Grands Prix he will be OK again. He has had so much bad luck already so he deserves to win this year.

MXA: We heard that Ake was trying to make his Yamaha into a Maico.

PK: He put Maico forks on it and . . .

MXA: Not very subtle.

PK: Yamaha's probably going to tell him to stop it. He'll have to learn to ride the Yamaha—we have proven already that it is a good bike, so just try to ride it. I think that they should do that, too. They shouldn't make a Maico out of a Yamaha.

MXA: Well, the Maico is so different from the Yamaha.

PK: It's different, right. It's a good bike, also.

MXA: How about the Russians on the KTMs? Have you had a chance to watch them?

PK: Russians—they are crazy. They

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hold it wide open all the time, but they crash . . . they get tired and break the bikes.

MXA: Why do they do that?

PK: I don't know. They have a policeman with them all the time. He says, "Well, if you don't win today, no food for three months." They really are different. I wouldn't like to be a Russian.

MXA: How about the Americans?

PK: The Americans? They are getting very fast. One day they will be the World Champion, for sure, because here in America you have 220 million people, I think. Isn't it something like that? There must be somebody, you know, who could do it. Like in Europe, there's not so many people, but they have the good ones, so why not in America. In America it's even easier to have them, because you have much more facilities. There's more money. Things move faster. You can straighten things out faster. Like in Europe it goes slow. You have to do everything by yourself. It's a hassle! I had several offers, but I picked out this one because I like America and I like to train so much and teach the way to do it right. You can always keep riding and riding, but there's also a future . . . you have to think about that, too. I am married and I have a little girl. I'm only 26 years old, though. I'm not yet old.

MXA: Indeed. ●

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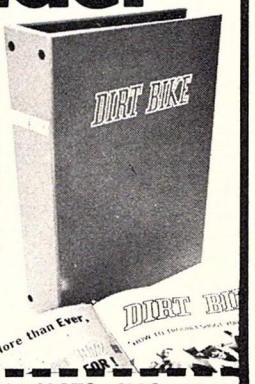

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WHO'S WHO

Cont'd. from page 37

gether in a big hotel for the awards banquet following the West German 250 G.P. After we snored through the speeches and the awards presentation, the lightweights drifted away while the hard core got down to some serious partying.

Arne Kring won a huge ceramic flower vase as part of his prize for tenth place. Arne immediately dumped the flowers out and with the help of about eight other Swedes, some German race mechanics, a Japanese development engineer, two rakish English side-hack racers and certain members of the press, the vase was filled with about three gallons of the good local brew and passed up and down the long banquet table.

Everyone took a turn at the lip of the foamy pot while Arne led the cheers. First he counted the gulps in Swedish, then it was one, two, three . . ., then eins, zwei, drei . . . The girls couldn't even hold the thing up and when somebody tried to help them they usually choked and/or got beer down their front.

The pot was refilled at least once and then the entire party jumped in cars and moved to the carnival grounds across town.

During the summer, small German towns will use almost any flimsy excuse to set up huge fest tents for music, beer drinking and fun. I don't know what the occasion for this fest was, but after a few minutes it looked like it had been held in honor of the sport of motocross.

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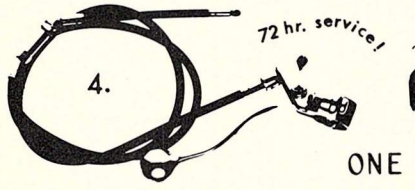

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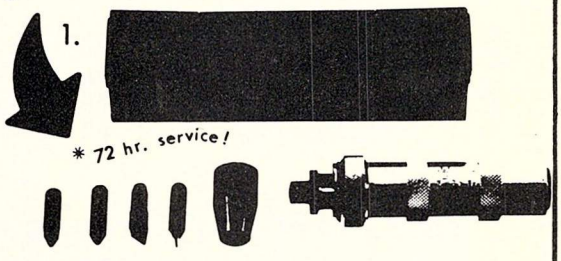

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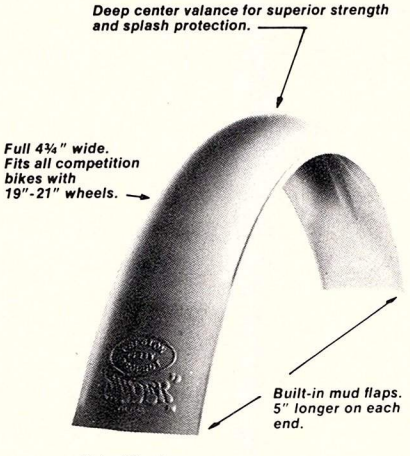
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and roll tune the German band played, the Husky team turned it into a Swedish folk dance by doing jumps and high kicks in their heavy wooden clogs.

Werner Schütz, a young German Maico rider who had earned his first World Championship points that afternoon, walked up to the girl at the outdoor bar and shouted, "Fifty beers for all my friends."

Vic, the Japanese engineer, loosened his belt another notch and surprised everyone by hitting six for six with a pellet rifle in the shooting gallery.

Emile was also winning artificial flowers at the shooting gallery, but that fun came to a sudden climax when Adolf Weil's mechanic shot out the only light bulb in the shooting gallery tent.

Get this, girls: In the dark with the light behind him, Adolf Weil looks just like Paul Newman: Same eyes.

* * * *

When we first saw the Russians in the Summer of '72 they were a ragtag lot. They rode cobby looking CZ works bikes with the barrels all sawed up and friction tape on the handlebar grips. They wore greasy, baggy leathers and old faded sweatshirts. Some of their riding gear looked like it had been handed down from Victor Arbekov.

Their pit looked like a road camp from "The Grapes of Wrath." Their Czech mechanics worked with big coarse tools and they kept a battered aluminum teapot on the camp stove.

They had traveled thousands of miles across eastern Europe in battleship gray cars and vans jammed full in a tangle of bikes and cramped bodies.

The car wheels still carried the mud of their homeland—and perhaps for the boys from across the Urals that was the only familiar sight on their first trip into Western Europe.

Before they change into their riding clothes they often wear Russian-made blue jeans and western-style sport shirts.

After practice sessions or between heats they lounge in the vans or on the grass—talking, joking and laughing softly among themselves—but they almost never venture out of their own pit.

At dinner in the hotel or at the awards banquet the Russians sit with their manager in simple dignity. Sometimes there is wine with dinner, but I've never seen beer in the pits, even on hot days. The Russian boys are well-mannered, reserved—almost shy.

But gawd, are they fast! There are usually four Russian riders, and they hammer around the track as if they were riding on sheer strength and will alone.

The Russians don't seem to care about style; no fancy cross-ups, and no soft landings. They slam across the bumps sideways, front wheel first—whatever is fastest.

About mid-way through the season

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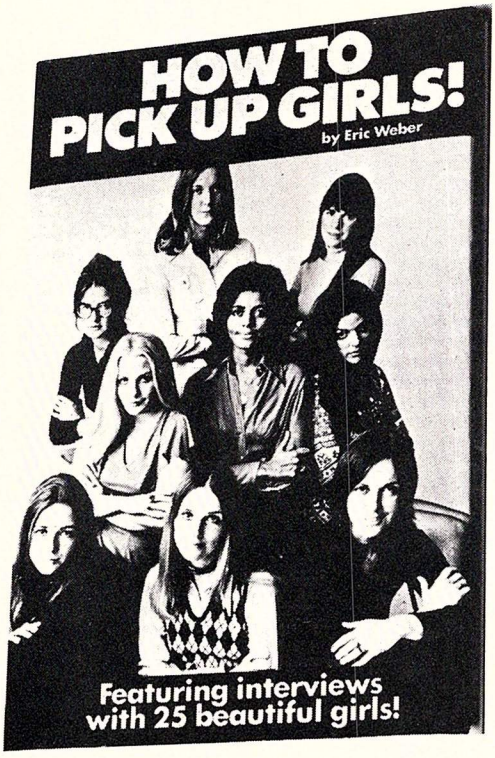

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From an accountant in Ohio

I want you to know that you have written one of the best books of all time. One that was long overdue.
From a California swinger

It works! I wasn't even half way through it and I got a girl! Even my brother — who has taken out every girl in the world — said WOW! when he saw her.
From a prep school student in Massachusetts

I was at a pet shop and I saw this cute girl. So, following the advice in your book, I said something to her. We got small-talking about the dog she was going to buy. Then I said may I call you sometime. Her eyes lit up with pleasure and surprise. She said, "Sure!" and gave me her name and number. To make a long story even longer, we've been going out the past couple of weeks and have a groovy relationship going. She's a stewardess and a great woman.
From a 30 year old bachelor in Seattle

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KTM came on the scene and the Russians began getting all the trick stuff—new KTM jerseys, Swedish leathers, shiny boots and bright red motorcycles.

Tzofimets Yuzi, the Russian team manager, is a big, barrel-bellied man with gray hair and faded blue eyes. He is with the boys constantly and he seems to treat them as their father would. He has their welfare at heart, but what he says, goes—no questions.

Yuzi is an ex-motocross champion of Russia, and he can stand on one corner and know what's going on everywhere on the course. During a race he knows exactly when each of his four boys is coming around and if he can catch the man in front of him. He has more hand signals than a third base coach in a world series game.

* * * *

Jaak Van Velthoven, the lanky Belgian who won Yamaha's first 500cc motocross Grand Prix, has an interesting story about how he got his first motorcycle.

It seems that Jaak had an older sister, and her boyfriend happened to leave his square-barreled DOT at the Van Velthoven home one week. Well, the temptation was too much for young Jaak and he sneaked the bike out into the field and rode the hell out of it. Since it was his first bike ride he wasn't too skillful yet and the bike suffered a fair amount of damage.

That left Jaak's father responsible for the wreckage, and he wound up buying the motorcycle. Jaak said that his dad was pretty mad at first, but when Jaak started racing and doing well he mellowed out a little.

Then the other juniors began pulling past Jaak because they had faster bikes. Jaak's dad said we can't have that, and bought him a new Husky. The Van Velthovens are a bucks-up family and they have a contract with the Belgian government for road construction in that country.

One thing led to another and Jaak's father became the Husqvarna distributor for Belgium, while Jaak was quickly rising to the top among the

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National class riders in Belgium.

Enter Yamaha. The Japanese firm needed a young, go-fast European to wring out their new G.P. machine, and they gave Jaak a call. The rest you can read about in the magazines.

Jaak started riding Grands Prix while he was still with Husqvarna, but his first win came at the end of the 1972 season when he won the Luxembourg G.P. for Yamaha on the same day that Hakan Andersson won the Swedish 250 round on a Yamaha.

Jaak is about 6 foot 4 and still in his early twenties. After his win in Luxembourg he looked like the high school basketball player who had just won the big game and didn't quite know how to handle it socially.

Van Velthoven is still on the way up, and Roger DeCoster has him picked as a strong World Championship contender in a couple of years.

* * * *

The Grand Prix tour must be especially hard for the young Japanese mechanics who have to spend as much as half a year on the road and in a culture that is foreign and sometimes baffling to them.

It's to their credit that they are so efficient and almost never lose their composure, but, just like everyone else, sometimes they just blow it.

One night the multi-national crew from the Yamaha team strolled into a fine dinner house in Belgium. It was one of those zoot-capri places where they have trout swimming in a big glass tank so you can show the waiter which one you want to have cooked up and served.

But the sight of those healthy, live fish was just too much for one of the young Japanese mechanics.

His eyes grew bigger. He went *"Ah So!"* under his breath and excitedly rolled up his sleeve to grope around in the cold water of the fish tank. He came up with a big lively one and then he grabbed a knife and a fork and turned the flopping fish into a perfect trout filet right there on his plate.

"Very fresh!," he grinned as he finished the last quivering bite. ●

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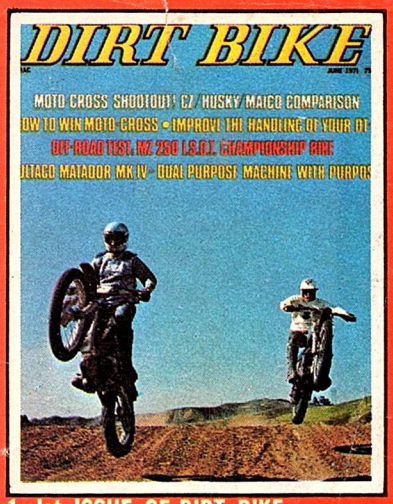
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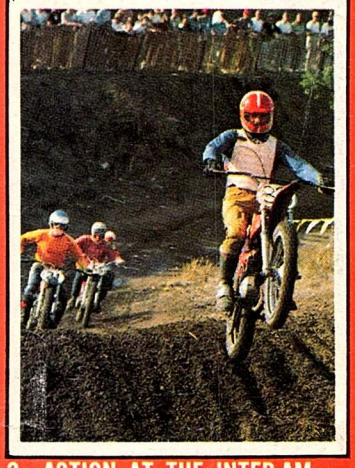

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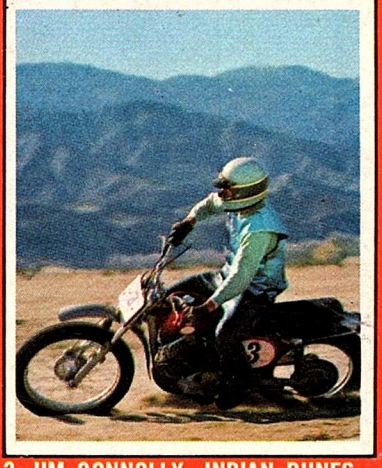

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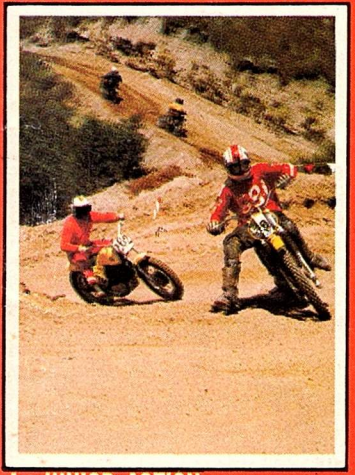

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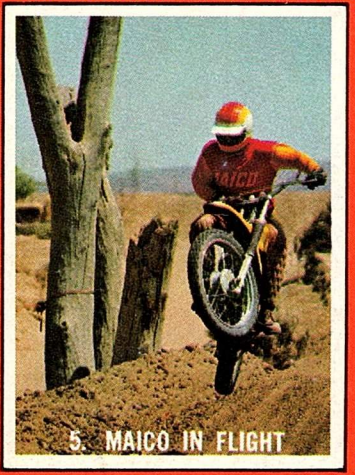

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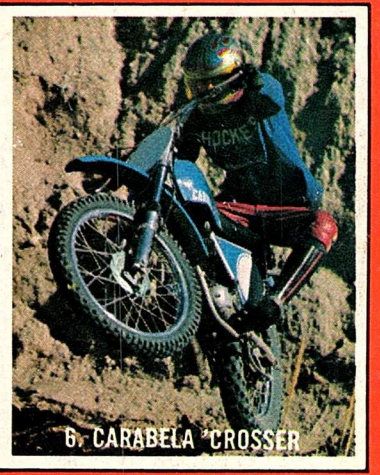

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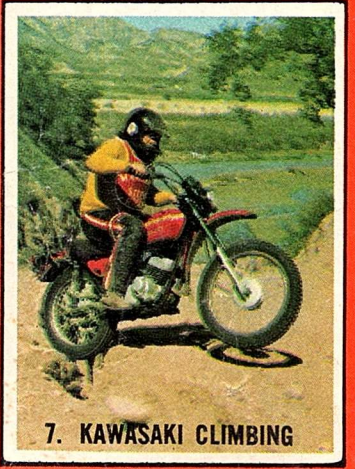

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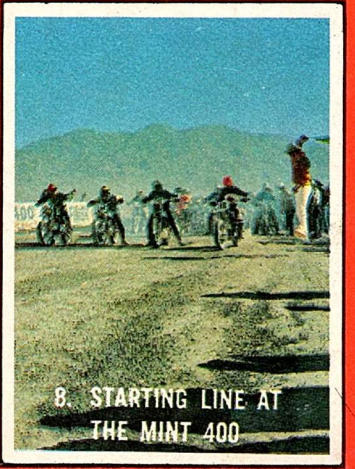

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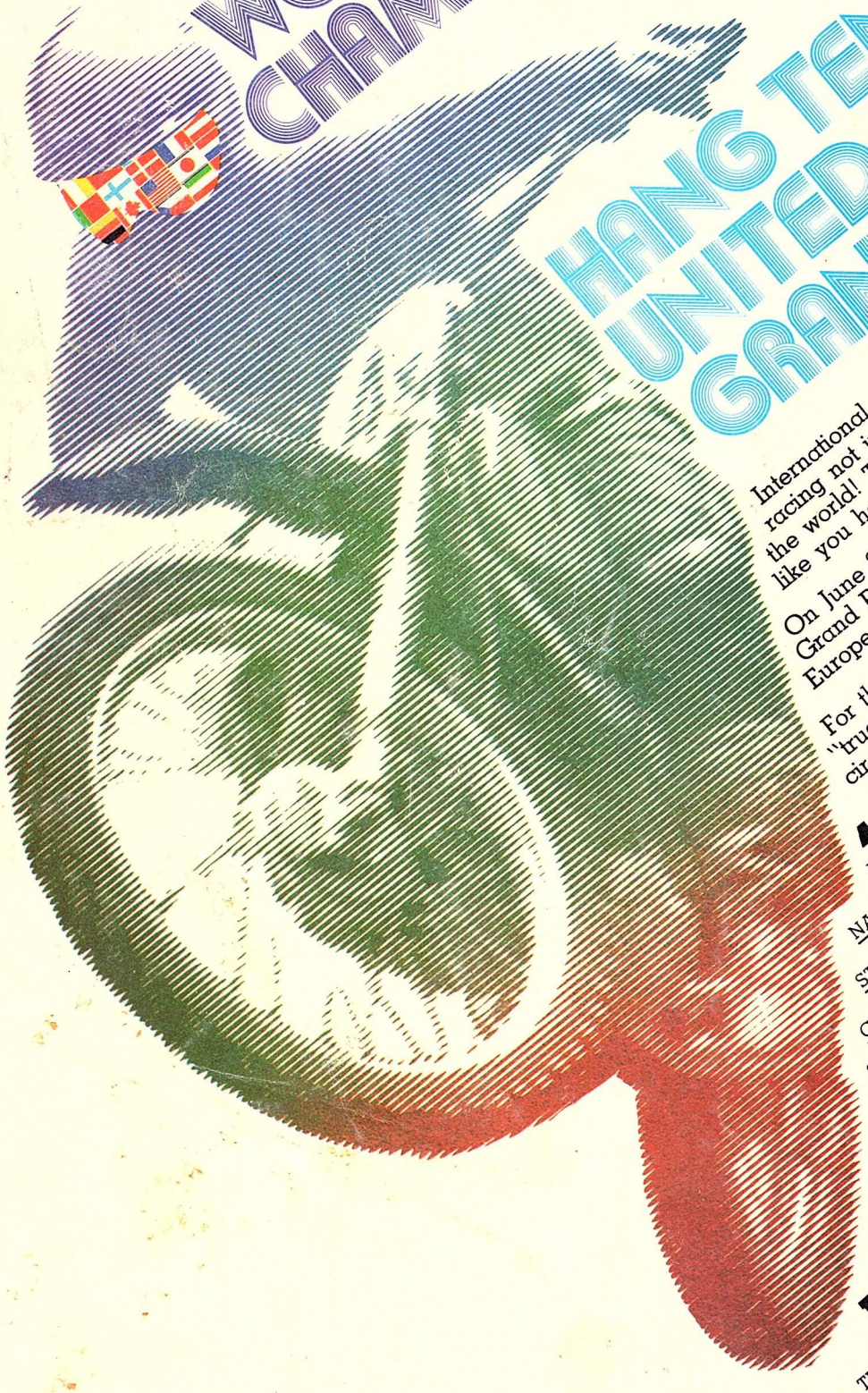

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